



TOWARDS SUSTAINABLE ARCHITECTURE AND URBAN FORM
**Socio-Cultural Aspects of Sustainable Application of the Practice of
Home and the Mahalla's Everyday Life in Iraq**

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IN THE NAME OF GOD

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ABSTRACT

Traditional architectural and urban artefacts are showed over the centuries as a powerful imprint of human actions and practices and are being developed on the basis of concrete socio-cultural factors and environmental rationalities. Spatial and morphological patterns of traditional environments have exceedingly evolved to fulfill and accomplish the social and cultural needs of the populace in their dialectical interplay with the surrounding environment. This relationship conceptualises the man-made environment, as the repository of meaning, in users' reciprocal relation with the surrounding environment. In the context of history, the human tends to dwell when experiencing the built environment as meaningful. Traditional contexts are highlighted as physical and spatial interpretations of human activities, skills, thoughts and resources creating identifiable and meaningful realms related to space/place, time and society. The study uncovers the process of the formation of the house and *mahalla* in order to shed light on how the built environment responds to inhabitants' socio-cultural determinants and everyday lives. It unfolds how changes in the nature of Iraqi society and its priorities affect the architecture of home and *mahalla* by reference to the impact of modernity with all its alien socio-cultural principles.

This thesis focuses on the architecture of home and *mahalla* within the traditional core of Kadhimiya city and similar Iraqi socio-cultural contexts. At the macro analytical level, the research investigates the spatial and physical formation of the *mahalla* as a whole through detecting the socio-spatial aspects of its realms, and how its spontaneous form has responded to the socio-cultural aspects of the community in an integral pattern. At the micro level, the research will go deeper in the perception of the basic aspects of the individual and the family. It investigates how the traditional house reflects and satisfies the personal values of the individual, and achieves his socio-cultural beliefs and everyday life on the basis of inherent norms and conventions. In this vein, public, semi-public/private and private domains are investigated to highlight the mutual interplay between these spheres as key factors in understanding the architecture of the house and *mahalla*. The research discusses indigenous aspects and principles contained or embedded in the structure of the traditional environment, such as privacy, social solidarity and stability, neighbourliness and so on. It reveals insight into the male-female relationship in the social life of the traditional context, and how the position of women and their idle qualities impact the structure of the house and the hierarchical sequence and organisation of spaces. Identity, tradition, sustainability and everyday life are the main fields discussed with a specific end goal to outline and uncover the role of social factors, cultural beliefs and daily practices in the creation of this particular form.

Building on these values, the research adopts an interpretive historical method in revealing the characters of the traditional environment referring to residents' habits, customs, rituals and traditions. Several approaches to the built and home environment are discussed for paving or detecting reliable one in the methodological inquiry within which many tools and methods have been utilised and used i.e. archival records, interviews, historical narratives, personal observation and photographic surveys. Data generated consists of photos, maps, interviewees' comments, analytical diagrams and historical and travellers' descriptions.

Research findings indicate many of the inherent and underlying principles upon which the architecture of Iraqi traditional house depends. Within this context, the study has tried to unfold how the formation of the traditional house and the *mahalla* responded to the socio-cultural aspects of the community and the daily life of its members. Findings, concerning the design principles of the traditional *mahalla*, were realised as indigenous norms and standards embedded in the structure of society, which can be useful for architects, designers and planners to reconcile traditional and contemporary urban forms through the application of former rules and conventions in City's conservation or redevelopment plans. The study reveals that the traditional environment had less socio-cultural contradictions, active day-to-day practices and clear, identifiable and meaningful identity compared with contemporary built environments. Research findings, thus, lead to a set of relevant recommendations addressed to many of the community categories, architects, planners, stakeholders and those interested in this field. They aim to promote the impressive role of socio-cultural factors and strengthen users' competence in their physical and spatial settings for home. Moreover, research recommendations discuss how social factors, cultural values, beliefs, practices and rituals can be re-employed in our approach to achieving a more sustainable living environment. Recommendations relating to identity and tradition aim to draw attention and shed light on the significance of traditional built environments in the development of special identity, which played a big role in the sustainability of these contexts for centuries.

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DEDICATION

I wish to dedicate my research to *the soul of my brother Hayder Al-Thahab;*
To my wife Nagham Almureb
for the love, understanding, encouragement and sacrifice.
If it were not for her, my dreams would never come true; and to
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CHAPTER VIII

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Glossary of Arabic Terms

al-Bayt; Home (Arabic: البيت)

maskan, dar; House (Arabic: مسكن , دار)

mahalla (pl. mahallat); local community(communities) (Arabic: محله , محلات)

darbuna (pl. darabin); local alley(s) (Arabic: دربونه , درابین)

Eid al-Adhha; Al-Adhha religious feast (Arabic: عيد الاضحى)

Eid al-Fitr; Al-Fitr religious feast (Arabic: عيد الفطر)

aila, usra; family (Arabic: عيله , أسره)

farah; wedding ceremony (Arabic: فرح)

sheikh; elder of a community (Arabic: شيخ)

ulama'a; a community or characters of legal scholars in Islam (Arabic: علماء)

futuwwat (shaqawat); tough characters in traditional city, guardians or defenders of the community (Arabic: فتوات , شقاوات)

hajj; pilgrimage (Arabic: الحج)

harem; women's quarter (Arabic: حريم)

hijab; veil (Arabic: حجاب)

shanashil; wood-lattice windows typology towards the outside sphere in Iraqi traditional houses (Arabic: الشناشيل)

ursi; wood-lattice and coloured-glazed windows typology towards the inside sphere in Iraqi traditional houses (Arabic: أرسى)

kabishkan; wood-lattice windows typology on the mezzanine level and towards the outside and inside spheres in Iraqi traditional houses (Arabic: كابشكان)

howsh (fina'a); the courtyard in the traditional house (Arabic: حوش , فناء)

zuqaq (pl. aziqqa); local alleys (Arabic: زقاق , ازقه)

hammam; public bath (Arabic: حمام)

barrani; outside or reception hall (guest room) in the traditional house (Arabic: براني)

bee'a; low taste, from lower class (Arabic: بينه)

shroogi; from lower class (Arabic: شروكي)

tarma; colonnade space surrounding the courtyard in traditional houses (Arabic: طارمه)

talar; a colonnade open space to the courtyard on the ground floor in traditional houses (Arabic: تالار)

mejaz; bent form entrance in Iraqi traditional houses (Arabic: مجاز)

maqaahee; local coffeehouses (Arabic: مقاهي)

al-tohoor, al-khitan; circumcision (Arabic: الطهور , الختان)

suq (pl. aswaq); local market (markets) (Arabic: سوق , اسواق)

agd; local alley (Arabic: عكد)

diwankhana; public zone in traditional houses (Arabic: ديوانخانه)

usta; local builder (Arabic: أسطه)

tannoor; A traditional bread clay-oven (Arabic: تنور)

badgeer; wind catcher (Arabic: بادكير)

Interviewee Coding System

The standard code used for interviewees in this thesis is [In.m.y], where (In) refers to the interviewee's number, and (m) refers to the month and (y) to the year. In the appendices, all interviews are listed in details (residents, architects, historians, sociologists and official).

CHAPTER I

THE INTRODUCTION

Preface

Strong dominance of the socio-cultural aspects and rationalities of traditional societies poses a prominent role in dealing with the physical traces and imprints of human beings that have been developed over the centuries. Spatial organisation in traditional built and domestic environments has been evolved to meet the socio-cultural beliefs, needs, rituals and daily practices for its users, and thus to respond to the entire built environment (Ragette, 2012, p. 9). In line with this, traditional built forms in the Arab World are considered as meaningful and indispensable assets and an irreplaceable treasure trove of human knowledge, practices and experiences. These intangible factors, according to Amos Rapoport (1982), bind physical and spatial components together into an interrelated and coherent context (Abu-Gazzeh, 2010, p. 278). This system, according to Norberg-Schulz (1980), determines the meaning of man-made environment in its reciprocal relations with the surrounding context within the specified historical context (Soud *et al.*, 2010, p. 45). Traditional environment displays the rich materialised content of human intellectual resources that conducting identifiable, meaningful, unified and harmonised physical contexts by reference to the people-space-time-activity relationship (Cetin, 2010, p. 30).

Home is an ideal compound and integrated system that can reflect a wide range of social, cultural and environmental expertise in all its characteristics and aspirations (Rapoport, 1969, p. 46). Much has been said and written about the physical aspects of the house, and the impact of this environmental phenomenon to reach an aesthetically acceptable configuration and to achieve sufficient level of environmental sustainability or whatever reason. Home, as a repository of human reactions and experiences of all failures and successes, constitutes principally both human values and spatial characteristics (Rapoport, 1989, p. 100). The former reveals home as a human and moral institution while spatial properties reflect various factors and notions including social, cultural, spiritual and emotional investments that exercised by the individual or a small social group, represented in the family (Smith, 2006, p. 61). From this point of view, traditional built form, in general, and home, in particular, can be considered and analysed as fundamental mechanisms reflecting interdependence between people's socio-cultural aspects and the whole built form. This type of investigation can essentially identify and absorb the social, cultural and physical qualities of the place. These qualities reveal or display inherent sustainable potentials in one type of the urban fabric, represented in the house.

1.1. The Context of the Research

Traditional built environments in Arab societies were formed in response to harmonious and tangled relations between different social, cultural, spatial and physical factors in the context of the whole concept of the urban tissue (El Demery, 2010, pp. 101-102). Cohesion and homogeneity of these contexts ceased to be the case when communities exposed to rapid social, cultural and economic changes since the late nineteenth century. Decisive changes in the socio-cultural principles of these communities are far more extreme than ever. Due to these conditions, especially during the last three or four decades, Iraq has passed through a series of crucial

transitional changes that led to the replacement of inherited aspects and standards by alien factors and attributes under the title of modernity. The new situation has not been yet proven or established any real stability in the urban environment in indigenous communities. Instability can be evidently noted in the home environment as it displays the largest and most perceived form (Kiet, 2011, p. 37).

One of the basic requirements of the individual in any society is the urgent need to provide adequate shelter. People's well-being through the provision of appropriate housing is a source of great concern to sociologists and anthropologists. This need has been recognised by the United Nations, in their demand that governments should take responsibility for the preparation, and facilitate the acquisition of their citizens' adequate shelter (Eldemery, 2002, p. 4). In this vein, there is a clear confusion of what is meant by "*shelter*". As the abstract meaning of the word, it refers to or accommodates the physical and spatial characteristics of the house. Meanwhile, home is more than a house or not just a basic shelter or self-contained entity. On the contrary, it is an integrated and comprehensive socio-cultural organisation. It is a permanent structure that embraces individuals' interactions with others within the same social group or community, throughout the entire urban fabric of the neighbourhood or the city (Eyüce, 2002, p. 18; Bianca, 2000, p. 210). Former position led to the import and use of alien patterns that have nothing to do with the rich social, intellectual and cultural heritage of this region. It led, moreover, to the marginalisation of the role of inherited socio-cultural potentials, derived from traditional societies, in forming a sustainable urban environment. On the other hand, new actors of the built environment have threatened inherited social values, relations and experiences. Within this context, people, as main practitioners to adapt to the built environment, are obliged to preserve and enhance their home environment. They need to take care of any factor or procedure that enables them to provide balanced and organised relations between social, cultural, psychological and physical characteristics. Urgent need for privacy, security and safety, social solidarity and cohesion, social stability and identity are some of these principles which must be taken into consideration (Al-Naim, 2006, p. 101). The mutual relationship between people and the surrounding environment, as achieved in traditional contexts, has been ceased with the successive changes in the nature of Iraqi society. Changes revealed a major crack in social and cultural principles, as important criteria that enabling people to introduce themselves and express their personality (Cetin, 2010, p. 31).

In the analysis of new methods to achieve sustainability, some studies have addressed the importance of the social and cultural aspects of society and the way in which these values can be invested and employed in contemporary and future developments. According to Rebecca L. H. Chiu (2004, pp. 65-66), limited pieces literature focus on social and cultural sustainability to the extent that the existence of a comprehensive study of such concepts is still missing. In spite of their unique role, most scholarly studies in the home environment have attributed sustainability requirements to the physical aspects of the house. They have shown a high ignorance of the importance and necessity of human aspects in the formation of the whole structure of the house (El Demery, 2010, p. 105). This negative phenomenon refers to the impact of political and

economic institutions on individual's behavioural temperaments and responses in contemporary societies (Abdelmonem, 2011a, p. 2). These approaches focus on environmental and economic factors as well as borrowed patterns of visual forms rather than pay attention to the intangible aspects of mutual relations that binding people together and with the surrounding elements (Elsheshtawy, 2008, p. 76). Social and cultural potentials are seemed to be underestimated or neglected in contemporary developments in spite of their relevant role in the preservation and maintenance of traditional societies over time (Douglas, 1991, p. 289). In line with this thought, the consistent and cohesive association between social, cultural and spatial attributes, which are the result of the man-environment mutual relationship, has been ignored and diminished in contemporary environments.

Home represents a great central with respect to the urban structure in modern Iraq, and influential part of the whole socio-spatial system, in which the entire environment affects the design and use of the home. It expresses the existence of generations of families and promotes their traditions and identities. It enhances family's privacy from the intrusion of others. Its physical form and spatial organisation are largely impacted by the social and cultural milieu of its users. Moreover, it provides environmental shelter from the severe weather in this region, as the passive purpose of space, where creating an appropriate environment for the daily life of the population represents its positive purpose as a *social unit of space* (Rapoport, 1969, p. 46). Understanding the traditional urban structure is significant in order to achieve and introduce a balanced approach to the problem of modernity by accepting the traditional environment and, consequently, its underlying values as a resource for the continuity and sustainability of contemporary contexts.

A number of studies dealt with social values, cultural beliefs and daily life in the traditional contexts or investigating the formation of the traditional urban fabric relying on former aspects. These studies cover many parts of the Arab world such as Cairo, referring to the studies of many scholars particularly that of Dr. M.G. Abdelmonem (2010) of social life in the Cairene hara. The absence of such studies with regard to Iraq and limiting most of them in dealing with environmental standards, economic criteria and formal characteristics when going into the traditional contexts, as have been mentioned above, are the basic objectives of this study. It represents an attempt for the purpose of addressing knowledge gaps in the field of study. The research will try to recognise and identify the socio-cultural aspects derived from traditional contexts and their role in the formation of their unique spatial morphology in our approach to a sustainable living environment. Kadhimiya will be the specified context in which this study revolves around due to its specific historical, religious, social and cultural dimensions as well as the nature of its urban fabric as a comprehensive and integral example of the traditional Islamic environment. Moreover, this context is still full of many features that enable it to provide a clear image of traditional environments, in addition to the availability of many studies, analytical surveys, archival records and development projects which, due to current political and security factors, will be helpful in the continuity of this study and achieving its main aim and objectives. However, methods by which to achieve these goals need to be reconsidered in order to detect a

kind of serious reform that is necessary due to very serious consequences made by current domestic developments, especially with regard to the Iraqi situation (Nagy, 2006, pp. 3-4).

1.2. Research Area

During the last three or four decades, the term "*sustainable development*" has become a major issue in the development strategies of various governments. This attitude has been specified differently on the basis of multiple criteria (Jiboye and Ogunshakin, 2010, p. 118). Communities, especially in developing countries in the Arab world, have the responsibility to raise living standards for their people. This includes improving social and cultural standards of the population, in addition to the adoption of appropriate and reasonable physical, technical and environmental solutions (Cooper, 2011, pp. 31-32; Chiu, 2004, p. 66). Christopher Alexander (1985, p. 24), confirms that:

"The real meaning of beauty, the idea of houses as places which express one's life, directly and simply, the connection between vitality of the people and the shape of their houses, the connection between the force of social movements and the beauty and vigour of the places where people live ... this all forgotten, vaguely remembered as the elements of some imaginary golden age".

In this sense, the research will focus on inherent socio-cultural aspects derived from traditional Iraqi communities, through the investigation of one type of structural tissue represented in the house. It will go through analytical investigation of these aspects and their role in the sustainability of traditional societies. Environmentally, the house is the oasis of family and culturally embodies the status of the mosque for the family in most Arab societies. It is more than a just basic need of human requirements but important issue in the construction of social life and the evolution of individuals' socio-cultural values and principles (Rapoport, 1977, p. 272). Brundtland report (1987) came with many serious goals with regard to achieving a sustainable approach. One of the fundamental objectives of the concept of sustainability is the need to ensure a better lifestyle for everyone in present time and future generations (Cooper, 2011, p. 34; Jiboye and Ogunshakin, 2010, p. 117). Most studies on the concept of sustainability focus on environmental factors and economic categories. Exotic elements and contemporary technological advantages are the main methods used in the provision of the desired level of sustainability (Chiu, 2004, p. 67). This study is an attempt to draw attention to the role of social and cultural aspects derived from the traditional home environment, as the main core of sustainability, to reach sustainable and reliable solutions for current and future developments.

Social and cultural dimensions need to be considered together, as are investigated as one broad issue in all facets of convergence or divergence. Both are interrelated and cannot be discerned in some cases; in terms of culture, its values, factors and variables play a significant role in highlighting and identifying social norms and principles (Rapoport, 1986, p. 158). It affects the social variables of Iraqi society and daily functioning of human activities. The interrelationship

between these two issues is an important consideration especially when it comes to developing and improving the well-being of the individual. This kind of improvement involves certain culture-specific variables, including social relationships and quality of life as well (Chiu, 2004, p. 68). The study discusses 'space-activity' or 'environment-behaviour' relationship over time, where on-going interaction between man and the built environment is a continuous process of mutual relations. This includes the influence of users' needs on their behaviour in public and private spaces, which can be interpreted as a series of adaptations of the physical settings in such a way as to fulfil these needs. Physical configuration settings affect, in turn, users' practices and behaviours by facilitating an activity or limiting another. Therefore, this study focuses on the relationship between two main sets of variables to uncover and clarify its main objectives. The first involves socio-cultural factors, daily practices and lifestyles, as functions of socio-cultural status, while the other incorporates the spatial and physical characteristics of the settings that embody former values.

One of the main problems facing developing societies in the Arab world is a complete neglect of the role of inherent socio-cultural factors in the architecture of the house (Elshehtawy, 2008, p. 77). This issue will be discussed revealing the different approaches or positions dealt with tradition. Briefing the sense of this concept constitutes an important platform for research processing towards its main objectives. In most cases, new developments do not take into account the historical, cultural and local topography and, in some cases, environmental standards as well. Moreover, they demonstrate a clear neglect of the needs of these communities, in the long term, to achieve sustainable and interactive growth. On the other hand, new forms of development are often alien, hostile and devoid of local characters leading to significant loss of identity (Taleb, 2006, p. 1). Tradition, according to the perspective of many scholars, is considered as the past of culture and is not actually exist except in the collective memory (Abdelmonem & Seim, 2012, pp. 163-164). This approach stands against the direction of many researchers who look at tradition as the main source of our habits and beliefs. In this sense, tradition stands independent of current and future developments. The concept of nostalgia is the best expression of this position. This approach is counter to the former and looks to the past as historical issue or, what has been termed, *romantic nostalgia* to all that is [Old] (Eldemery, 2002, p. 2). The research will be directed towards the third position, which believes in the urgent need and inevitable role of tradition in current and future developments. It is the one that derives the best from the past to feed in the future. Investigating socio-cultural aspects and possibilities of traditional spatial and physical settings are the main mechanism of this process (Bechhoefer, 2001, p. 12).

Every culture and society demonstrate a particular built form that is a reflection or production of lifestyle and social beliefs of its people. It acts as symbol of a social identity and family recognition. Maintain and enhance the cultural and social aspects of the traditional house displays an important issue for sustainable developments. In this regard, the historical background of the community and its development is inseparable from the social and cultural aspects of individuals (Jiboye & Ogunshakin, 2010, p. 117). Historical analysis of social and cultural domains of the house and the urban fabric of the built environment is necessary as illustrations to support positions rather than data to test propositions. Historical stage generally leads to great care in

data collection and compilation. To point out the social, cultural and contextual analysis of a set of examples in different time intervals is accurately useful in the expression of the nature of society during each period (Rapoport, 1986, pp. 158-159). It is, therefore, necessary to diagnose specific historical period for the purpose of standing on the architectural evolution of the various aspects and attributes of the house and the built environment. In the case of Iraq, residential districts or *mahallas*, within the walled city of Baghdad, reflect and constitute the bulk of the holistic structural complex. It can be assumed that the basic design or layout of built settlements had not been changed much in the period between the Seljuks (1052-1152 AD) and the end of the 19th century. However, a great deal of surviving components and residential complexes is not too old. *Mongol invasion, termite infestation* and damage caused by recurrent floods and fires are the main reasons behind the demolition and loss of a large part of the old neighbourhoods and houses. Modernising the city, demolition of the old wall and the implementation of the first residential extensions, as well as many other actions, were the first modern changes and cultural shifts under the administration of the Ottoman ruler "Midhat Pasha," which dated from 1869. (Bianca, 2000, pp. 249-251). This provides concrete indication that the beginning of actual developments and most transitional changes started from 1869. This date will be taken as starting point of the historical analysis of the study. Evolution of home before this date will depend largely on general historical accounts and narratives. With regard to other Iraqi cities, there were not significant changes, can be identified, in the physical and structural characteristics of the built environment or the architecture of the house. The remote distance between these urban settlements and the administrative centre of the Ottoman Empire in Baghdad was the main reason behind that.

1.3. Research Problem

Reasons behind the inspiration or interest in conducting such research are derived from many problematic issues and elements. These factors lead the reality of the traditional built and home environment in the Arab world and Iraq, as the case study of this dissertation, to an inconspicuous and confusing stage. They threaten the architecture of this region and lead to a great loss in its fundamental principles, which are practiced and evolved over centuries according to sober and coherent social, cultural and spiritual principles. These aspects, as main issues for the production of this study, can be developed or summarised as follows:

- Marginalisation of the rich heritage of this region, which is evident through the significant deterioration in the physical and structural condition, and the level of services provided to the individual in traditional home environments. It is, therefore, necessary to build or create a solid database for the purpose of forming a sustainable model for current and future developments. Arab societies suffer from the impact of these factors that have emerged dramatically during the second half of the last century due to many contemporary issues and trends, rapid developments and significant changes in most areas of life.
- Total neglect and disregard for the importance and the role of the social and cultural concepts and values of the community. This part will tackle the essential role of these values, as

influential corners and issues to the continuity of the traditional home and built environment. In addition, it will highlight the unique and distinctive identity achieved throughout history. Great deals of scholarly studies have relied on environmental and economic principles in the investigation and analysis of this context. Developed recommendations and solutions reveal other radical problems, in dealing with these issues, due to their reliance on ideas, trends and attitudes alien to the nature of Iraqi society.

- Total reliance on borrowed patterns leads to a heavy loss in the authentic identity achieved throughout history. Current patterns demonstrate different cultural, social and intellectual backgrounds, which have no relations with the local built environment in all its aspects and possibilities. Many scholars have discussed the idea of tradition and identity from different points of view by looking at them as a result of the phenomenon of globalisation. Identity, from the viewpoint of a number of sociologists, has been built on the basis of interlocking systems of social and spatial relationships and everyday practices of individuals throughout the day. The research deals with the problem from its social, cultural and spatial dimensions by reference to the Iraqi home environment.
- Ignoring or disregarding the concept of sustainability, or the frameworks that can focus on what is important socially and culturally for future developments in the case of Iraq, has led to a kind of intellectual confusion that impacted heavily on the built environment. Across the different areas of research, the role played by the socio-cultural factors of each society will be revealed as a basic standard in sustainability. It will demonstrate the necessity of a local architectural model; socially, culturally and physically, in our approaches to a more sustainable environment.

Next chapter will take this part of the study in the discussion of the various components of research problem, or the main focus of research interests, in order to refine and define the different levels of the problem. It will be of interest for the development of the main principles on which research problem depends. Analysis of these factors is important to detect and clarify the main aim of the study and its various objectives.

1.4. Research Main Question

The basic question the research seeks to address is:

“How aspects and possibilities for sustainability, derived from the social and cultural factors and daily practices of members of the community in Iraqi traditional home environments, can be re-utilised in order to create a broad platform for modern, contemporary and more sustainable living environments?”

This question is concerned with presenting and revealing tradition and experiences in home environments, as a contemporary and sustainable living culture, as well as to be aware of or deal with the social and cultural beliefs, values and everyday practices of their actors. It refers to how these factors interact with or affect the organisation of different spaces of home and *mahalla*. It

relates to the role of social and cultural values in drawing a complete image of the traditional home environment. This is the question that concerns not only the need to prove whether or not to maintain traditional environments, but also to highlight their latent values and principles that can be reused. It concerns to a large extent the concept of sustainability and how social and cultural factors of this issue can be achieved through the re-employment of the beliefs inherited from the traditional home environment. It refers to the concepts of tradition and identity which are the results of intertwined relationships between various factors, variables and practices.

1.5. The Aim and Objectives of the Research

The overall aim of this research is:

“To conduct an analytical study of the socio-cultural aspects of the traditional home environment and utilise them as an extensive platform and vital base in our approach to achieve a more sustainable development.”

In view of the above facts, the thesis includes a number of objectives to guide the development of research methodology. These objectives can be summarised in understanding the role of socio-cultural aspects and socio-spatial relations in traditional home environments in Iraq. Moreover, they will detect the spatial morphology of the neighbourhood unit (*mahalla*) by reference to underlying social and cultural potentials behind sustainable applications, and how these possibilities can support the current approaches to sustainability. According to this view, the research will be developed in order to achieve the following objectives:

- To identify the social and cultural issues of sustainability reflected by or inherent in the traditional home environment, and the mutual relations between the man and the surrounding context as well as organising spaces within the confines of the traditional neighbourhood unit (*mahalla*) and the home.
- To determine the influence of the content and complexity of the traditional *mahalla*, from the social, cultural and spatial aspects, in the establishment and development of a more sustainable built environment.
- To reap the social and cultural profits of the rich heritage of traditional living environments in the maintenance or development of a specific identity as an important factor in promoting sustainability.
- To find out how the way of life of users of traditional contexts enhanced sustainability, and to study the possibility of employing this side in the current approach to a more sustainable living environment.
- To develop a framework for sustainable living environment by utilising the intangible aspects of the human being and active daily routine as key indicators in the sustainability approach.

A great deal of social and cultural factors has been confirmed and embodied through comprehensive and durable residential structures for human habitation reflected, for example, by

the introverted pattern of the traditional house. Compact organisation and spontaneous urban form of the traditional built environment in Iraq reveal clearly how the intellectual organism; represented in the [Man] in all his cultural, social and cognitive background, can express his intellectual beliefs and values and employ his simple capacities in an integrated physical compound. This process has produced built form which can convey meaning and imply thoughtful socio-cultural themes and dimensions. It reflects the lifestyle of the community, its social nature and relationships and the way people adapt to their urban environment (Kiet, 2011, p. 43). It embodies and displays dramatically many of the characteristics of the community, represented by, for example, privacy, social solidarity and stability, security and safety and an active everyday life. It fosters and emphasises a specific form of identity that reflects inherent social and cultural aspects. These principles, and many others, have been achieved through the sequential order of irregular and spontaneous social spaces from the most public to the utmost private, illustrated respectively by the traditional *mahalla* and home (Ragette, 2012, p. 50; Saoud, 2002, p. 18). This order, in all its characters, values and practical applications, affects the corresponding socio-cultural performance, practices and habits of its users. These elements have been clearly shown in some spatial references, basic urban forms and brilliant ideas and technical issues that give the built environment its unique physical composition and spatial organisation (Bianca, 2000, p. 28).

1.6. An Overview of the Research Methodology

Reliance on previous experiences in drafting our present and the storming of the various interrelated research topics and disciplines require a methodology suitable for achieving the main aim and objectives of the research. The main essence of architectural studies; concerning the knowledge distinguish between the historical development and theoretical analysis or, precisely, between the process of design and users' reactions, responses and conceptions, requires a specific methodology with the essence of the qualitative method to understand and grasp the built environment in a comprehensive and holistic way towards interpretive strategy (Groat and Wang, 2002, p.14). Research methodology concentrated in the extrapolation of real values in the formation of the traditional environment, which requires a clarification of the key determinants affecting the phenomenon in question. In our view, the traditional environment, its built form and underlying shaping factors should be understood by focusing on the core values of society, and the mutual dialectical relationship between social values and spatial settings over time.

Qualitative research has been selected as a key method within the proposed strategy in the development of joint analysis. Based on the nature of research question and main objectives, subjective and socially constructed studies can be relevant in interpretive inquiries referring to diverse realities related to social, cultural and personal interactions and behaviours as well as historical facts. The study tends to be qualitative due to its effectiveness and reliability in social studies, and in extrapolating or obtaining reasonable facts about the social and cultural values, opinions, behaviours, principles and beliefs of a given society. Human underlying aspects, including contradictory realities of human behaviours, beliefs, opinions and emotions in addition to

individual relations and interactions with each other, are among its main concerns. Qualitative method is also effective in identifying intangible factors, such as social norms, gender roles, ethnicity, and religion, whose role in the case of the research may not be readily evident (Kramer-Kile, 2012, p. 27; Bhattacharjee, 2012, p. 113). It enables people to embrace and understand their everyday lives, and, ultimately, the concept of '*why things are the way they are*', and '*why people act in the manner that they are doing*' in their daily lives. Major concerns relate to interpretations associated with the social phenomenon under study, social, cultural and behavioural factors of our daily lives (Hancock, 1998, p. 2). It offers inclusive perspective by setting a set of variables and implicit and explicit principles and rules, without any attempt to rig or manipulate the situation under investigation. These aspects are crucial in studying the home environment, as long as the latter relates to non-specific or, in particular, non-measurable criteria, and meaningful and identifiable interactions between residents within social spaces. It relates to the understanding of the meaning, people construct with regard to their daily experiences and feelings of the world around them, as well as their interaction with surrounding spaces and components without the necessity to indicate or invoke the ordinal values of the data (Silverman, 2006, p. 26; Hancock, 1998, pp. 2-3; Mason, 2002, p. 3).

On the other hand, socio-spatial approach, with the support of many attitudes to the built environment, will be relied upon to investigate and conceive the latent principles behind the formation of the traditional environment and the reasonableness of its continuity for centuries. These attitudes depend on the dialectical relationship between the [Man] and surrounding space, and the effectiveness of activity-space-time relationship in extrapolating the real values behind the organic and spontaneous nature of the traditional fabric. In order to study and devise above mentioned realities, several methods have been selected in line with the main aim and objectives of the research. Direct and indirect observation of past experiences and people's daily lives, open-ended and in-depth interviews with key categories of society (local historians, sociologists and representatives of notable and common residents, architects, planners, stakeholders and decision-makers), historical records and narratives are among the methods that have been implemented to record the main features of the traditional environment. Moreover, photographs, sketches and analytical survey of two different sets of old houses and contemporary examples with the aim of carrying out a comparative investigation are significant in socio-spatial analysis. All that had been strengthened with the support of historical and ethnographic works of many scholars and specialists in the nature of Iraqi society and culture.

Interpretive-historical and socio-cultural analysis for three different time periods were used to identify the socio-spatial development of home. Sorting information, generating concepts and building relevant explanations and recommendations are research final step.

An entire analysis of research methodology will be addressed in chapter five.

1.7. The Organisation and Structure of the Research

To realise a logical form, the thesis consists of the following chapters with a brief overview of the content of each of them:

Chapter 1: **The Introduction;** the main aim of this chapter is to describe and clarify research context, study area and the methodology adopted. It provides an overview of the whole structure and organisation of the study. It introduces research main problem and its different sub-topics as well as the main aim and objectives of the study.

Chapter 2: **The Thematic Approach;** this chapter discusses research main problem and the different aspects or elements behind the main focus of the study. Research problem refers to four main topics. The first relates to the concept of tradition and the role of social and cultural values in its expression and perception, as well as the factors threatened the architectural heritage of Iraqi traditional environment. The second topic concerns the notion of identity and the impact of imported doctrines and models. The third part refers to inherent social and cultural values that could be derived from the traditional environment, and the significant role of daily life, practices and experiences of its users in maintaining its sustainable issues. The fourth part of research problem covers the concept of sustainability. It reveals the missing or marginalised role of socio-cultural aspects and users' daily lives in the drafting of a wide platform for a more sustainable home environment. The discussion will include a special focus on social and cultural standards of sustainability, and the importance of their role in the performance and achievement of sustainable development.

Chapter 3: **An analytical Review of Traditional Built and home environment;** this chapter includes a number of issues covering the main concept of traditional and home-based environment. It focuses initially on the concept of tradition and identity, privacy and different attitudes or approaches to the built environment. At the same time, it will investigate the structural and spatial morphology of the traditional built form and neighbourhood unit (*mahalla*). It deals with many social, cultural and physical factors in the development of a clear idea about the meaning and architecture of home. In other words, it will provide an idea of the built structure and its different socio-cultural values and principles. It will address their roles, as local determinants, in the formation of this informal and spontaneous built form. This part presents and detects the main problem of the study through the analytical investigation of the traditional house. It reveals the rich social, cultural and intellectual background of this component which can be of great benefit in such studies.

Chapter 4: **The Home and Mahalla in Iraqi Traditional Contexts;** this chapter has been divided into two main parts.

The first part deals with **the traditional neighbourhood unit (*mahalla*)**. The main topic for discussion in this section is the concept of the traditional neighbourhood unit (*mahalla*), and social and cultural factors that prove the spontaneous form of its urban fabric. It will detect interrelations between socio-cultural values and daily practices of its actors on one side, and surrounding

environment on the other. This section will be an interpretive and descriptive analysis of architectural, physical and spatial attributes of the traditional *mahalla*. It will shed light on the organisation of various spaces and main determinants behind the formation of this regulatory system. It will tackle the idea of private/public spheres and socio-cultural aspects of transitional spaces, represented in semi-private/public contexts. In this vein, the concept of gender segregation and implementation or achievement of privacy plays an important role in the formation of such organic form. This influential concept will be extensively discussed in this section to the extent of its impact on individual's behaviour and thus the sustainability of the urban fabric of the *mahalla*. Many issues and criteria will be analysed such as the concept of compactness in order to indicate its role as an impressive objective in contemporary approaches to achieve sustainable urban form.

The second part refers to **the traditional house in Iraq**. This part of literature review will tackle the main aim of the study with regard to the house. Many issues will be discussed in this part including various definitions and terminologies of the idea of home. It will investigate the different models of the house in the traditional neighbourhood (*mahalla*) in Iraq. Architectural description of the most common type of traditional houses in Iraq represented in the courtyard house, and socio-cultural efficiencies of its different spatial, physical and architectural elements will be reviewed and analysed. Socio-cultural aspects and everyday practices, interactions and experiences of the population, in terms of their portrayal of the main factors for this social and ethical institution, will be investigated. Moreover, this part of the research will include a historical review of the evolution of the traditional home and *mahalla*.

Chapter 5: **Research Methodology;** In this part of the study, a comprehensive methodological process will be displayed and conceived for the acquisition of appropriate information and data with respect to the analytical field of the study. It will identify relevant research methodology will be adopted in the detection of research main aim, and in addressing its problems.

Chapter 6: **The home and 'mahalla' in a historical sequence- From 1869-2015;** this chapter analyses the home and *mahalla* in a historic sequence by highlighting the evolution of socio-cultural values of Iraqi society and the factors that influence this change. It will cover the period between 1869 and 2015, including its main temporal divisions, and social, cultural and political reasons for this classification.

Chapter 7: **The home and mahalla in a socio-spatial analysis;** Case studies of several parts of Iraq, covering previous temporal phases, will be collected and analysed in this chapter in a way that would address research main aim, reasons, problems and objectives. Historical, social and spatial analyses form core components that will be addressed in the description, analysis and investigation of each case.

Chapter 8: **Conclusions and Recommendations;** this chapter deals with the findings of the literature review, field study and the results of the analyses and discussions for the purpose of formulating definitive conclusions. This part of the research will:

- a. **Present the final conclusions according to the analytical study of the findings.**
Recommendations will be submitted in order to develop the proper exploitation of research findings.
- b. **Will be an overview of what has been done and identified through theoretical and empirical study of this dissertation,** and, at the same time, the synthesis of the expected developments and areas of study, this research could affect, revealing their crucial needs in the future.
- c. **Will determine and identify research topics that can be analysed and developed in the future.** Research materials depend, to a large extent, on what has been addressed, discussed and investigated in this study, in addition to the benefits and positive aspects or issues that are expected to be obtained from the theoretical and empirical study.

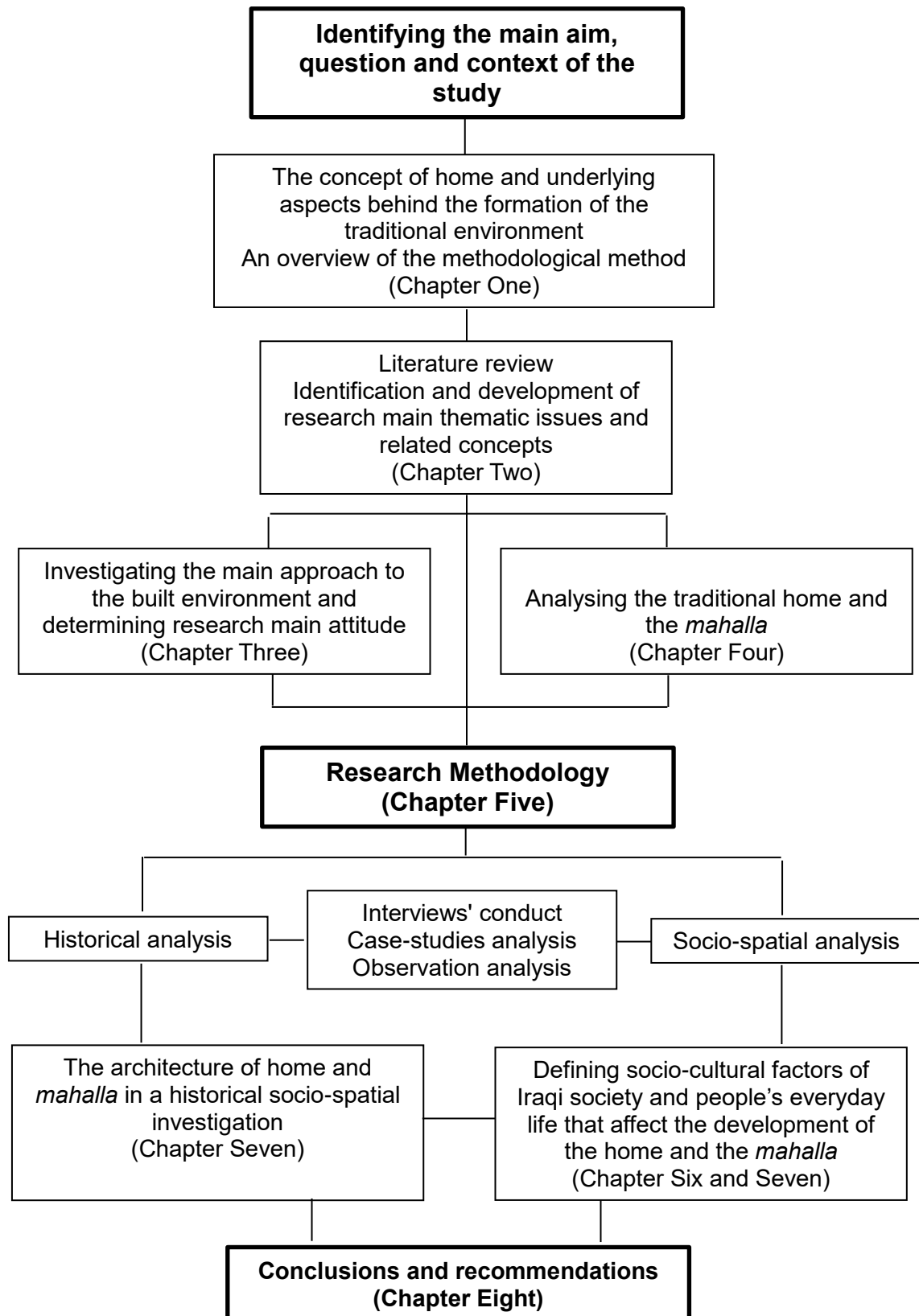


Figure 1.1: The process of the research

CHAPTER II

THE THEMATIC APPROACH

2.1. Problem's Identification

Providing rationale or reason for studying research problem, concerning the architecture of the house and great loss in its fundamental principles due to ignorance of the decisive influence of social aspects and cultural values of its users, is a key topic in qualitative research. Rationale scientific study manifests through the need to fill the existing gap research field or to activate individuals' attention to a specific factor. Denis P. Barritt (1986) argues that focus on the reason or rationale is in intensifying awareness for forgotten or neglected experience. Increasing research awareness will hopefully lead to better understanding of the manner in which things appear to others, *and through that vision leads to improvements in practice* (Creswell, 2007, p. 102). In his argument concerning research nature, John H. Boyd (1986, cited in Knight and Ruddock, 2008, p. 213) states that "*some topics and issues are in-vogue which cause interest in these and even funding behind them*". Accordingly, there are many factors and categories that can affect the type of improvements, presumed by Barritt (1986) in arguing the reasons behind every problem.

In built and home environmental studies, several problems and forces affect improvement attempts or efforts in any field. Political and economic organisations have a more threatening effect, such as the case in Iraq especially over the last three or four decades due to the unstable situation faced by the community, as it will be referred to later. They impose specific formality on people's relatedness to each other and to their physical environment. These very institutions are so powerful in imposing their dominance on architecture rather than tackling the socio-cultural nature of the home environment (Abdelmonem, 2011a, p. 2).

In line with this thinking, the traditional home environment includes many complexities and issues that are needed to draw attention to in order to find out the appropriate solutions to unexpected reactions from previous institutions. To manage problem's complexities, the researcher, and through his/her investigation will analyse a number of issues and topics in order to feed research main objective. These topics are essential in revealing and clarifying the whole concept of the study. They may also affect other fields of study which in turn will be so confusingly and upset for other trends and directions. Therefore, it is necessary to introduce the main aim of the study for clarifying research problem and its sub-factors. Research aim, as mentioned in the previous chapter, is to highlight the role of socio-cultural aspects of the traditional home environment, as a rich storage of such factors and beliefs, in preserving and maintaining our tradition and, hence, creating a wide platform for contemporary and future sustainable developments. Accordingly, this chapter, and through various topics, is to present the current problems related to the architecture of the house, and to identify related controversies behind the progress of the study. This can be extrapolated from the main objective, which revealed the basic aspects of traditional communities in the Arab world and Iraq in particular.

Based on previous notions, research main problem has been distinguished and classified into four specific issues, including:

- **The concept and crisis of tradition.** This part investigates the main values and elements of the problem and how traditional built environments in the Arab World are suffering from the negative impacts of alien values and trends. This issue will be discussed thoroughly in the next chapter which concerns the analytical study of the built and home environment.
- **The second topic focuses on identity.** This section conceptualises the meaning of identity and the role of socio-cultural aspects in the configuration of a specific identity. It represents the general factors that threatened our distinct identity and their impacts on current and future home environments.
- **Exploring social and cultural aspects** occupies the third part of the research problem. This part discusses the relationship between several values and factors that form the basic themes of the role of social and cultural values in traditional home environments. Emphasis is on the importance of culture in the formation of the traditional house in Iraq through investigating. Moreover, it illustrates how interrelationships and social interactions between the individual and surrounding environment can maintain underlying invisible or intangible characters and thus the formation of the built environment.
- On the fourth part of the problem, **the notion of sustainability** has been summarised to give an overall idea of the role of human latent aspects in shaping the traditional environment. It reveals how socio-cultural aspects are underestimated and ignored in current home developments. It illustrates the necessity for a local architecture socially and culturally in the design and creation of a sustainable environment.

2.2. The Problem of Tradition

A Great deal has been written and produced regarding the physical properties and architectural attributes of the house. Others have analysed and investigated the impact of the environmental phenomenon in determining appropriate structural details of this type of shelters to achieve the desired level of sustainability. Numerous studies have addressed the aesthetic aspects of the home in order to access to the configuration which is formally accepted, or whatever the reason is (Smith, 2006, pp. 11-12). These studies have overlooked the role of socio-cultural aspects as basic principles in the architecture of home. Home does not represent just physical components, structural characteristics or abstract spaces, but is a human institution and spatial organisation in which different social, cultural, moral and emotional factors, by an individual or a small social group, can be homed and practiced in each corner or detail (Kultur, 2012, p. 262; Smith, 2006, p. 134; Rapoport, 1986, p. 160). James Tuedio (2002, p. 207) asserts that *“people with materialised identities may still find themselves yearning for a lifestyle, for company, for social nourishment, for the vitality of community, and above all for meaning, belonging, and a sense of place”*. In conjunction with this thought, a great deal of human values and social beliefs; such as privacy, social solidarity, a sense of security and belonging, intimacy and a sense of place, have been associated with the concept of home (Jutla, 1993, p. 208). House indicates cultural phenomenon

that falls under the influence of the cultural milieu to which it belongs. It is a long history of culture, memory, social and spatial cohesion, and personal identity and so on (Malda, 2009, p. 9).

It will be useful for the progress of this study and define research problem, to submit Samuel Johnson's definition of home (1977) as *"..... it is shaped by the culture of its inhabitants, and that shape is the result of thousands of events performed in"* (Soud et al., 2010, p. 45). In this regard, the culture revealed as a key factor for most of the human practices, behaviours and social interactions. Culture, according to Johnson (1977), is the result of generations of practices and experiences through which has become a major determinant and crucial catalyst in the traditions and identity. These factors are influential and decisive in the presence and continuity of traditional values and beliefs. Traditional Arab societies have shown, according to their similarities in social and cultural systems, a harmonious relationship with their environment. This kind of co-existence reflects inhabitants' daily lives, activities and behaviours, and in turn formulates the fundamental aspects and principles for the establishment of their own tradition and identity (Al-Naim, 2006, pp. 21-22). Phenomenon ceased to be the case due to rapid and decisive social, cultural and economic changes experienced by these societies during the second half of the last century. Disruption was practised in the pursuit of new exotic social, cultural and economic attitudes with all their dichotomies, shifts, and tensions emerged in the social and cultural sphere. Accordingly, inherited values and experiences were threatened by the new doctrines in the built environment. Building on their intellectual and philosophical approaches, people's latent relationships with each other and with the surrounding tissue have been destroyed with the emergence of new alien factors and principles (Al-Naim, 2006, pp. 17-18).

Assessment of inherited social and cultural processes, which formed the context of this very production, will be viewed as an initial step and prime core for the identification of research problem. The study will present and analyse the problem related to the concept of tradition and identity, as well as the different approaches to the concept of sustainability. In order to be closer to the specific problem and its different sub-issues, an overview of the concept of tradition and modernity as well as crisis over interconnected conflict between these notions will give a broad platform to respond to *"how do we currently live and express our home environment?"* issue.

2.2.1. Recognition of the Crisis of Tradition

Home architecture in the Arab world is revealed throughout history as a reflection of cultural diversity, explicit reflection and unequivocal expression of the shift in the social and cultural aspects of its societies. It has detected its significant aspects formed by social, cultural and environmental factors in addition to ideological, religious and spiritual values within the framework of coherent and reciprocal cultural unity (Abou Ashour and Atayah, 2010, p. 2). The notion of tradition reveals massive man-made attempts and shows a homogeneous combination of former factors within a very special compound viewed by home (Lawrence, 2001, p. 34). Reading the historical evolution of Arab architecture, in terms of its origin and growth, its urban morphology, its architectural models, its active reactions and significant memories makes it a distinct

phenomenon. It carries and develops different cultural meanings and symbols, and largely reflects the physical embodiment of culture in all its evolutionary and transformative phases (Mahgoub, 2010, pp. 23-24; Castells, 2004, pp. 67-69).

The result of rapid changes in the second half of the last century, sense of not belonging has dominated individual's viewpoint and reflected on what appears in the architecture of the house. People suddenly stood up against a totally different environment as a result of rapid economic and social transformations (Al-Naim, 2006, pp. 18-19). New and strange way of thinking was created in contrast to the inherited that was formed and evolved over centuries of experiments, and according to coherent settings of social aspects, cultural values, rituals and rules (Kiet, 2010, p. 46). To some extent and as intuitive traditions of home-life has become difficult to access, we, as main representatives of home, *became increasingly attached to a nostalgic sense of the meaning of home* (Tuedio, 2002, p. 207). This type of nostalgia was demonstrated in many formal methods, such as borrowing specific elements of traditional or Islamic structures, and pasting them into modern elevations in order to promote traditionalism in a contemporary vision as is the case with most residential projects in Iraq in the last few decades of the last century (Figure 2.1).



Figure 2.1: Haifa Street's development, Baghdad-Iraq, showing the impact of modernity on the traditional fabric of the surrounding tissue (Source: UNHP, 2010)

New doctrine demonstrates certain characteristics and properties different from the traditional or the old, and addresses, according to its ideological perspective, the way referring to the future. On the other hand, modernity embodies, through its approach, whatever stand against the legacy of the past (Heyen, 1999, pp. 10-11; Tsang, 2012, p. 29). History, according to its concept, is linear and unrepeatable, and represents the evolution of the achievements of previous periods, and places traditional cultures and their achievements in a dead angle (Bianca, 2000, p. 207). This attitude reflects the approach of many scholars or architectural theorists who look towards tradition as something from the past, or a body of culture which was present prior to the evolution of the place (Graburn, 2001, p. 6). It dislocates the sense of unity of traditional settlements through the achievement of monumental symbols in the urban fabric of the city to refer to a

memory or past. In response to this thought, Dr. Afif Bahnassi (1998, p. 67) argues that tradition is the inventory of human philanthropy which is not determined at the time that had elapsed, but in the continuous time. On the other hand, tradition; as a body of different values, beliefs and behaviours; or a flow of knowledge found in the memory of the built environment, displays the main attitude of another approach. It affects accordingly the intellectual and formal perception of new developments, but, at the same time, stands independent of these developments (Abou Ashour and Atayah, 2010, pp. 3-4). This attitude is emphasised in setting up new built environments without any interference with the traditional structures by allowing both of them to coexist entirely (Graburn, 2001, p. 6). This is clearly shown in the development of Fas in Morocco where new structures do not affect the urban fabric of the old tissue (Figure 2.2).

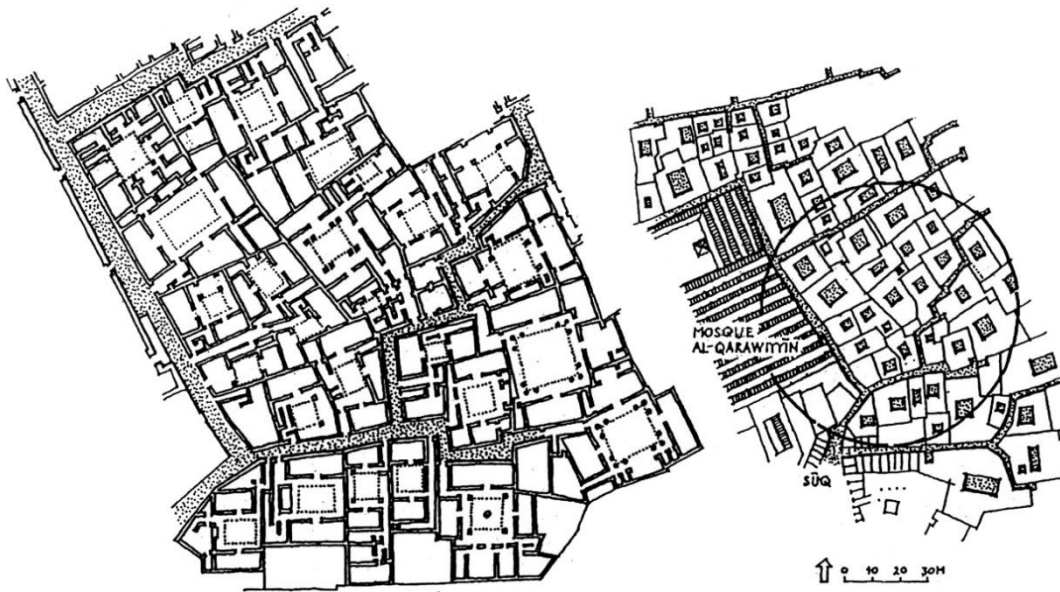


Figure 2.2: The traditional central part (residential district) of Makhfiya in Fez-Morocco in integration with the new structure (Source: Ragette, 2012, p. 51)

Many scholars have proposed another attitude to adapt to and employ the direction of modern progress with the values on which the existing contexts built. It views the old as part of the contemporary, and therefore, can be affected by new developments. Through this attitude, the traditional environment may expose to the risk of removal under the pretext of, for example, obstructing the development of the urban fabric, urgent need or whatever the reason is (Ibrahim and Hagirah, 2010, p. 11). Wide roads, or boulevards, penetrated the traditional urban fabric of most of the Iraqi contexts, such as the establishment of al-Rashid Street, Zahra'a Street in the city of Kadhimiya or that pierced the old tissue of Isfahan-Iran, are many manifestations of this approach (Figure 2.3, 2.4).

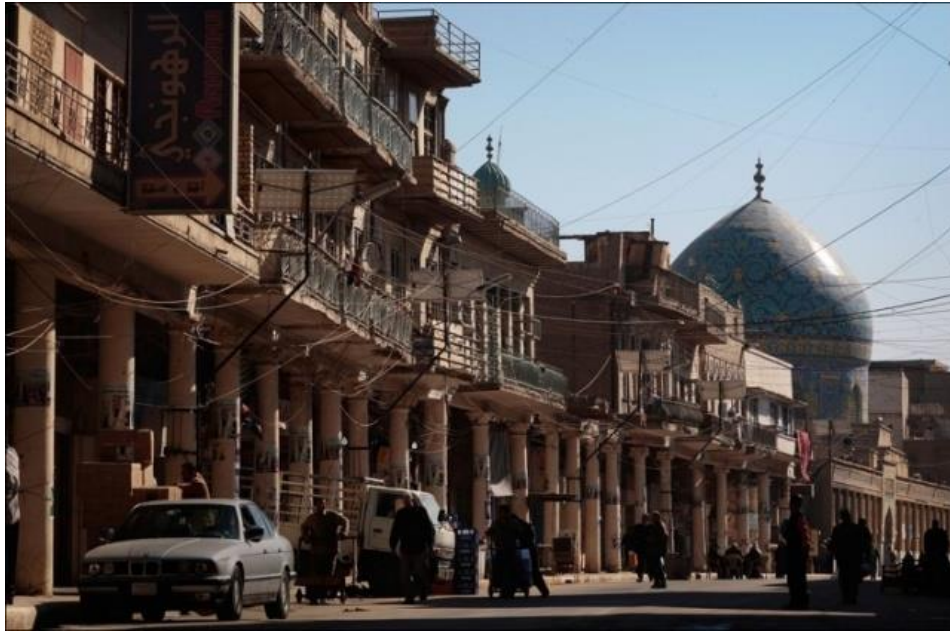


Figure 2.3: The scale of Al-Rashid Street in Baghdad-Iraq (Source: Hussain, 2008, p. 31)

Ibrahim M. Eldemery (2009, pp. 4-6) criticised the problem, facing the tradition, by classifying the main methods of conflict into two opposing forces; *anti-global* and *pro-global*. Others have dealt with it from different points of view and have attempted to detect the problem by addressing the different approaches to the traditional environment in its conflict with new doctrines. The design of home responds, according to their discussion, to specific physical factors, economic determinants and environmental possibilities. These studies have attributed the problem of tradition to borrowed physical elements instead of paying attention to coherent social and cultural principles manifested in people's mutual relations with each other and with the surrounding context. Accordingly, most of their proposals are centred on incorporating traditional images in the home environment as formal expression, reflection and embodiment of the concept of traditionalism.

Relating to the main objective of the search, a couple of questions can be developed to identify the problem. They are: "*What type of social and cultural values can be extrapolated and derived from the traditional home environment?*", and "*How can these factors be utilised in the current approach to a more sustainable home environment?*" These questions enhance research hypothetical argument for the role of socio-cultural values of traditional living environments in current and future approaches to sustainability. The concept of tradition and its many issues will be thoroughly discussed in the next chapter. Understanding modernity and its interaction or conflict with tradition can be conducted by providing feasible directions for human essentials through sustaining reasonable modes of human relations and interactions.

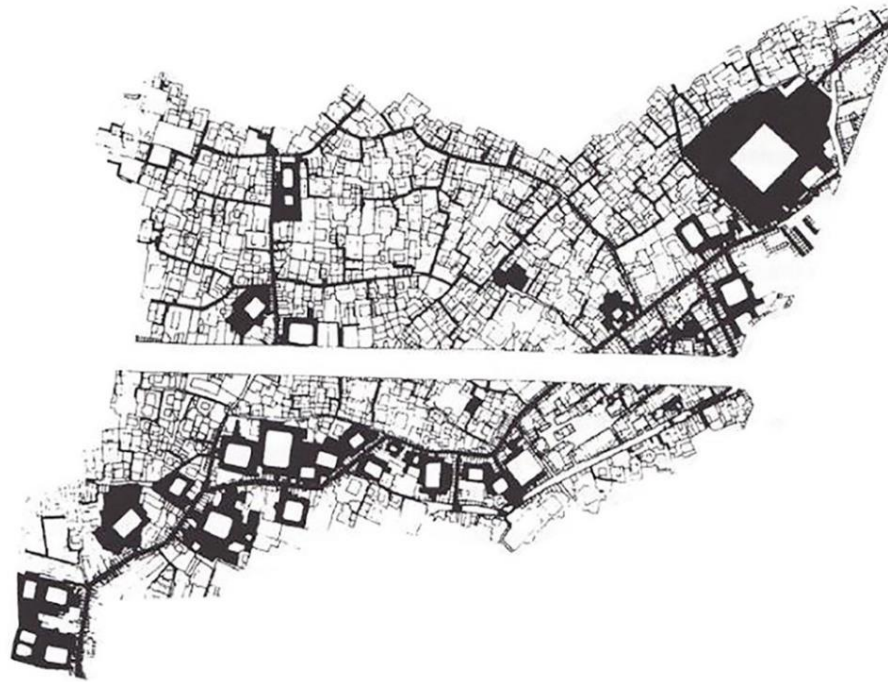


Figure 2.4: Avenue road in Isfahan-Iran cutting through the cellular tissue of the old city of the main bazaar spine (Bianca, 2000, p. 202)

2.2.2. Interaction between tradition and modernity

In the first and oldest sense, the term "*modern*" refers to the present or new, as opposed to the concept of "*tradition*," which means the former or old. It refers to the present time with all its distinctive features that distinguish it from the old. All the diverse levels of implications and meanings demonstrate the need of eluding it to the idea of present in terms of modernity (Heyen, 1999, p. 11). Modernity portrays present in a specific character, which makes it in various with the old or tradition, and shows in the meantime the route alluding to what's to come. It has been depicted as a break with tradition, and epitome of everything that stands against the legacy of the past (Tsang, 2012, pp. 21-23). This thought, by Octavia Paz, is a Western issue with no comparable significance in different societies. It deciphers time as being straight, irreversible and dynamic in correlation with its static idea in different civilisations. Last idea demonstrates the past as the paradigm of time which outlined as the particular model for the present, and can be reproduced sooner or later. This methodology was changed amid the Renaissance to build up another position shows the past as a wellspring of learning of present and future improvements, and can be impacted in a specific direction. Modernity, as an aggregate dismissal of tradition, has been reprimanded by Charles Baudelaire's origination of '*modern*' (1864) as the piece of workmanship that outlines the present (Savio, 2006, p. 7).

The model of the past was supplanted by the idea of progress viewed by modernity, which exemplifies the direct and unrepeatable origination of history. It debilitates the advancement of earlier achievements and puts conventional societies and their accomplishments in a dead point of view and unavailing presence (Bianca, 2000, p. 184). Theo van Doesburg's contention (1918,

cited in Heyen, 1999, p. 8), as "... *man must constantly destroy himself in order to construct himself all over again* ", shows obviously how the new doctrine in all types of art and architecture debilitated traditional heritage, and how tradition and modernity concepts are constantly in strife with each other. On the other hand, the notion of change, according to Charles Jenks, connotes a shift in society and culture, or to achieve an alternate structure than in its own (Durmus, 2012, pp. 27-28). Compared to the previous thought, both concepts are not in conflict, for the ability of tradition to continue and evolve over time. Continuity of tradition and its ways in present day social orders, according to Basim S. Hakim (1994), are looked as an internal resistance by the general population keeping in mind the end goal to make a sort of harmony between the distinctive qualities (Al-Naim, 2006, pp. 21-22). This attitude has been experienced by the traditional samples have been left to be integrated into the fabric of the new residential development of Haifa Street in Baghdad (Figure 2.5). Tradition, as indicated by social and anthropological studies, is connected to the progression of culture through the span of time (Savio, 2006, p. 4). The genuine clash is between outsider structures, under the label of modernity, and traditional acquired qualities and convictions. This conflict led to many social and cultural problems in traditional built and home environments in most Arab countries and Iraq in particular as a sign of social and cultural transformation (Al-Naim, 2006, p. 23). The cost of this contention in the Arab world and most developing societies is represented by the loss of their social and cultural identity due to a misconception of the role of these values in the expression and preservation of identity.



Figure 2.5: The reservation of traditional settlements during the development of Haifa Street, Baghdad-Iraq in 1985 (Source: Amanat Al-Assima, 1985, p. 8)

The next issue that has an important role in identifying research problem is the concept of identity. The traditional home environment of Arab societies and Iraq, as research concern, articulated, throughout history, a specific identity. The research will investigate the role of socio-cultural

aspects of traditional living environments in shaping this distinct identity. The analytical study will detect the very specific issues and factors that led to the loss of identity.

2.3. The Notion of Identity

Architecture as a human language, according to the viewpoint of many scholars, introduces many physical forms and spiritual meanings and embodies different socio-cultural factors. The art of architecture is the truest expression of people's and society's identity (Ashour and Atyah, 2010, p. 23). A sense of not belonging has become the main position in Arab societies as a result of the rapid changes in the last few decades. Within this context, people have faced alien environments and concepts which are entirely different from their intellectual and social reality (Al-Naim, 2006, pp. 18-19). Urban environment has in like manner endured a sort of instability as a consequence of a condition of imbalance and apprehension of losing or forsaking inherited cultural and social values, and thus identity. The presence of identity, or even its loss, shapes a huge issue in the congruity of traditional environments in developing societies (Porteous, 1977, pp. 89-91). This phenomenon is not identified with a specific culture or even a particular community. It has developed as a consequence of the concept of modernization or globalisation. Later notions have ignored or overlooked inherent social values and coherent cultural attributes in their approaches (Mohamed, 2002, p. 20). Abdel-Wahed El-Wakil (1992, p. 2) contends that the quest for the new; unguided by traditional standards, makes for pride and the loss of identity, in light of the fact that the tradition is constantly more prominent than the expert and his actual personality and identity is, truth be told, the tradition.

In the midst of global trends and intellectual conflicts, Arab societies have tried to create a new perspective that can reflect their true identity (Ashour and Atyah, 2010, pp. 24). Many theoretical and philosophical writings have addressed the term "*identity*", and have revealed many difficulties in providing one entire definition due to uncertainty about its meaning (Al-Naim, 2006, p. 126). Identity is a complex term especially in interdisciplinary fields of study. Definitions and terms used in each field are also different according to the meaning of tradition. Researchers in built and home environments have used various definitions seemed to be more precise and accurate in giving clear limits to the concept of identity. "*Lifestyle*", "*values*", "*self*", "*personality*", "*social and cultural attributions*", "*social status*" and others are many of these definitions and concepts (Hauge, 2007, p. 3). Identification is the primary cognitive mechanism used by humans to sort out themselves and their fellows. Identifying ourselves and others is a matter of attribution of meaning, which largely involves social values, practices and interactions (Hauge, 2009, p. 35). Manuel Castells (1998) defines identity as people's source of meaning and experiences which are constructed on the basis of social and cultural attributes, and has the priority over other sources of meaning (Castells, 1998, p. 6). Castells, in his definition, has attributed identity to an unmistakable procedure through which building the meaning and its cultural properties can be figured it out. his definition is bolstered by Charles Correa's way to deal with identity as a process, being a process and not a self-conscious thing (Correa, 1983, p. 10).

One of the significant roles of tradition is to create and maintain a certain platform that can determine and verify a specific form of identity for each community and, thus, its architecture (Alsayyad, 1992, pp. 3-4). This attitude, which is confirmed by many scholarly studies such as that of Martin Giesen (2000) in his conference paper entitled '*The Middle Eastern City: Identity Crisis and Design Crisis?*' shows clear and consistent aspects and characteristics of identity in traditional societies. On the other hand, Karl Propper (1948) has introduced two functions of tradition with reference to identity. The first is to create a particular order and specific structure that gives identity while the second is to give us something on which we can work, question, criticise and change (Giesen, 2000, p. 8). This dual role of tradition includes, on one side, order and stability strengthened by identity, and, on the other side, the basis for change in terms of socio-cultural aspects referring to the main concerns at home and built environments. This concept is confirmed by Douglas Kellner (1992) in his argument that identity in traditional societies is altered and stable while it turns into a subject of progress and advancement in modern societies. It reveals the rigidity and stability of identity in traditional Arab societies as long as it refers to defined social, cultural and religious propensities, guidelines and traditions (Mohammed, 2002, p. 20). Continuity in tradition and identity was stopped with the rise of the new patterns and thoughts (Bianca, 2000, pp. 186-187). This concept is shown in modern attitudes, desires and applications, as is evident by tearing down the old and laying new elements instead ignoring the significance of tradition and the necessity of identity (Figure 2.6).



Figure 2.6: A view of Baghdad-Iraq showing the emergence and scale of new architectural developments compared with the spontaneous form of the traditional context (Source: UNHP, 2010)

Kenneth Frampton in (1983) introduced his concept of '*critical regionalism*' as the strategy that can mediate the impact of universality with indigenous factors and elements derived indirectly from the values and attributes of a particular place. It depends, in its fundamentals, on maintaining and achieving a high level of self-consciousness. In this sense, Frampton forms the

basis for a kind of regional identity where physical and morphological elements of any built environment can draw and introduce a kind of shared identity. Forms and symbols that constitute the general shape of a built environment vary in a high degree from tradition to another according to a set of intangible determinants related to the region and place. These sources, according to Frampton, show the main codecs of identity (Fardpour, 2013, p. 206-207).

2.3.1. The Crisis of Identity

In line with above ideas about identity, the crisis is viewed as a result of the phenomenon of globalisation. The dilemma that confronted Arab societies because of the invasion of Western cultures and their negative impact on traditional ones is the main issue of the crisis (Ricoeur, 1965, p. 45). It is, according to Rapoport (1969, p. 46), the result of the application of western factors in dealing with the local needs of other traditional societies. Therefore, identity, as Yuswadi Saliya claimed in (1986), becomes a human need. It has incredibly turned into a necessity, as being perceived, for having identity, is generally satisfying (Mohammed, 2002, p. 20). Relationship between identity and local-global debate has been clarified by Anthony Giddens (1991, p. 32), who claims that "... Changes in self-personality and globalization, I need to propose, are the two shafts of the argument of the local and the global in states of high advancement. The level of time-space separation presented by high modernity is extensive to the point that, without precedent for mankind's history, self and society are interrelated in a global milieu". Local-global conflict, as exhibited by Giddens, certainly affects the shifts in self-identity. Modernity has affected local societies and delivered a broad change which drove in this way to the creation or accomplishment of conflicting socio-cultural associations in accordance with alien perspectives. This scope impacted Arab societies in a negative way, and led to further changes in the traditional environment, and in deepening the crisis. Problem is that these changes, which are the result of the impressive ideas of modernity in developing societies and the '*copy-and-paste*' mechanism to translate its concepts, have failed to make any reasonable connection with local socio-cultural settings (Talib, 1989, pp. 1-2). In actuality, they have created an unequivocal split in the essential standards.

Robi S. Sastrowardoyo (1983) discusses the idea of identity by reference to the philosophy of life in determining and promoting the lifestyle of each society. On the other hand, Correa (1983) introduces climate as the main determinant for identity, while natural settings and civilization, according to El-Wakil (1992), are revealed as effective factors in the creation of identity. The concept of place plays for others a key role in the embodiment of this notion; while religious principles, according to the perspective of many scholars, occupy an influential role in creating and fostering a specific type of identity. Identity, in terms of its social and cultural dimensions in Iraqi built and home environment, is rarely discussed; however, many scholars have tried to deal with the problem from different points of view. They have addressed their perspectives in various approaches represented in their designs and philosophical interpretations behind their works. Refaat Al-Chaderji, (1984), believes in the ability of social phenomena in the generation of the

desire and necessity for a national identity in accordance with certain factors that have nothing to do with the beliefs of other cultures and societies (Mohammed, 2002, pp. 20-21) (Figure 2.7). While ignoring the global notions, identity, according to Abdelmonem (2011), has been accomplished in traditional living environments by providing a sort of uniqueness to its users socially and culturally (Abdelmonem, 2011a, p. 6). Inhabitants will, in turn, give their homes specific meanings to maintain the continuity of individual and group identities. This study will investigate the potential of socio-cultural factors, derived from traditional Iraqi living environments, in drafting a specific identity of current and future developments.



Figure 2.7: Projects of Rifat Al-Chadirji which simulate the notion of identity. Left: Offices, Tobacco Warehouses, Baghdad-Iraq, 1974; Right: Central Post Office, Baghdad-Iraq, 1976 (Source: Mohammed, 2002, p. 83)

2.3.2. The Notion of Collective Identity

Concept collective memory incorporates a group of tangible and intangible variables and experiences embodied in each society. The former group refers to the physical aspects of the built environment; while the latter relates to social and cultural values that revealing asset of norms, habits, rituals, traditions and others. Identity function can be identified as an important tool to protect and preserve both groups against the elements of disintegration, posed by modernity. Physical and non-physical connotations of identity constitute a set of indicators to be realised, by a group of people, in a specific time and place (Al-Naim, 2006, p. 29). Accordingly, identity can be introduced as a comprehensive socio-cultural phenomenon that can be constructed through the continuous interaction between people and the physical factors of the surrounding context over the course of time (Rapoport, 1977, pp. 23-24). Thus, the focus here is related to the sense of identity as a phenomenon by reference to the socio-cultural values of the people. Values and rule systems of different groups, according to Rapoport (1977, p. 24), help to realise and achieve the built forms produced by their choices, thus affecting problems definition, used data and suggested solutions. In this argument, Rapoport shows the necessity of socio-cultural values, as the non-physical group of the collective identity, in understanding the physical and spatial categories of the

built environment. This concept involves determining socio-spatial relationships as a system of daily activities and experiences around the clock at traditional living environments. Each community represents, according to Richard Jenkins, “*a powerful everyday notion in terms of which people organise their lives and understand the places and settlement in which they live and the quality of their relationship*” (Abdelmonem, 2012, p. 36). In order to build up this study reaching the main aim and to consolidate research hypothetical model, an investigation into the concept of identity is essential in combining space-activity-time relationship in a dynamic state through the analysis of the role of socio-cultural aspects in everyday living practices. This issue leads to explore the interaction between the individual and surrounding environment as a unique practice in the expression of a specific identity for centuries.

2.3.3. People-Environment Interaction

In identifying man-environment interactions, Kim Dovey (1985, pp. 34-35) sees the built environment as identity as well as order and connectedness. It is an overlapping model where each topic introduces its definition and effects, through the views illustrated by the others, in an interrelated relationship. People's interactions with their built environment, according to this concept, are the reasons behind the influence, the place had, on identity, or how people affect surrounding places or spaces socially, emotionally and spiritually (Al-Naim, 2006, pp. 36-38). Such an inquiry is realised as a result of the comprehensive, holistic and reciprocal nature of the people-environment relationship.

Identity can be created by the social and cultural interactions of the individual, through his many sources of personality, in any social environment, and by a system of activities taking place in a particular environment. Küller ve Elmas (1991) He argues that the pattern of social interaction and the nature of the people concerned vary according to the system of activities taking place in different time periods within the same built environment (Hauge, 2009, p. 4). This emphasises respectively the space-activity-time relationship manifested by different patterns of interactions between the individual and the environment. Various contexts of the neighbourhood (*mahalla*) in traditional environments, such as semi-private/public spaces outside the house, distinguish the man-environment relationship during different time periods per day (Bianca, 2000, p. 38). Adding time factor will entirely identify and understand the concept of identity socially, culturally and contextually. This can be significantly viewed through the chronology of different social, cultural and, sometimes, economic activities and practices that take place at every level of *mahalla*'s spatial realms (Figure 2.8). The built environment may, in turn, affect the nature of individuals' social interaction and their psychological reactions through the achievement of different spatial arrangements and solutions within a specific context (Porteous, 1977, p. 90). These effects are manifested in the spatial sequence of the traditional urban fabric from the most public to the utmost private in order to fulfil the need for privacy, for example, as a prominent social factor in traditional societies. On the scale of the individual house, room size, height, location, furniture and other building variables affect many social and cultural aspects with reference to the people-place

relationship. This nature can be recognised in the changing of activities of the same room during the day according to the social situation faced by the family. On the basis of above thoughts, understanding of social and cultural interactions is influential in the formulation of specific identity.



Figure 2.8: Economic and social everyday practices and interactions in traditional public contexts in Iraq.

2.3.4. Home and Identity

This part deals with the concept of home as a human institution, environmental context or physical compound used by its users to detect their individual and group identity. It concerns the concept of the personal sphere, with all its values and beliefs, surrounded by the structural envelope. Ali Madanipour (2003) argues that a specific identity constitutes by latent interactions between the different parts of the personal sphere, and between them and the surrounding environment. Human needs and desires can be revealed through the mutual relations between the built environment and people manifested in their socio-cultural interactions, rituals and practices, including different meanings for different people. Order and organisation of these meanings may change with respect to the individual, or the small social group, and their priorities inside the house (Carmona, 2003, p. 3-4). Socio-cultural needs play a significant role in defining and identifying the meaning of home for a specific social group. In the control of these values by common rules, habits and customs, the individual's identity can be shared with others to forge a distinctive identity. This argument is supported by Rapoport's classification of cultural needs into five major factors. Four of them are social-oriented variables. Social intercourse demonstrates an important cultural factor controlled by religious values, customs and habits (Rapoport, 1969, p. 61). In this vein, home can be defined as a social, cultural and human phenomenon. In line with this thought, Andrew Sixsmith (1986) displays home as a centre of meaning revealing emotional and, sometimes, physical views in individual's life. Feelings of safety, security, comfort, happiness and belonging are many of these manifestations, which form essential parts of individual's history, identity and continuity. According to Dovey (1985, pp. 35-36), this type of identity involves a kind of interdependence between the person and the place. Such place takes its identity from the individual, who, in turn, takes it from the place. The intertwined man-home-identity relationship is a reflection of daily social, cultural and functional practices taking place within the same physical

context in different time periods. Each activity presents a side of human needs. Rapoport (1969, p. 61) has dealt with the significance of human needs in analysing the values or qualities of any culture. He argues that “*what is characteristic and significant about a culture is the choice, the specific solution to certain needs*”. Home can be accordingly defined as a specific system of settings in which a particular system of activities takes place. These activities are strengthened by the pattern of the activity itself, its meaning and combination with others in the same social space, forming, therefore, a particular system of activities.

Home is currently undergoing a critical period or situation which threatens this human organisation to the loss of identity. Jim Kemeny (1992, p. 121) criticises the disconnectedness of contemporary home from the social and cultural needs of its users. As a result, the architecture of home refers increasingly to spatial, physical, functional and economic values rather than socio-cultural categories. The former represents the contemporary attitude in architectural design which refers mainly to the economic and environmental performance of the home. The study will reveal the role of social and cultural aspects derived from the traditional home environment and daily life of its actors in drawing a distinctive identity in our approach to sustainable developments.

2.3.5. The Concept of Collective Memory and Culture

In the previous discussion, it has been argued that culture and its intangible components can shape the physical characteristics of the built environment through individual's interactions with the surrounding tissue (Rapoport, 1998 and 1969). The dynamic meaning of the concept of culture can be accessed through the investigation of its impact on the community day to day, decade to decade, and generation to generation. In this regard, collective memory displays a kind of change and continuity through a variety of social factors and practices that are important in the transitional nature of culture from generation to generation. This concept is summarised by Daniel Libeskind (cited in Heidenreich, 2011, p. 5) as a “*need to resist the erasure of history, the need to respond to history, the need to open the future: that is, to delineate the invisible on the basis of the visible*”, which is contrary to the viewpoint of others who insisted on invisible values as a basis for visual identification. The concept of collective memory is essential in giving a clear image or explanation for the necessity of continuity in cultural aspects of each community (Fithian and Powell, 2011, pp. 2-3). This can be clearly indicated in people's daily practices and experiences in most Iraqi traditional contexts. The daily life of inhabitants or users of *mahalla's* public spaces creates a sense of belonging, entire control over private realms, and thus identity as a result of generations of memories and common practices (Abdelmonem, 2011b, p. 999) (Figure 2.9).

The notion of collective memory embodies a container of shared information stored in the memory of the people. Philosopher and sociologist Maurice Halbwachs (1992, p. 182) argues and advances that the collective memory can be shared, passed on and constructed by groups, which, more than individuals, be able to draw on the knowledge and experience of the individual's present. It concerns the meaning of the built environment and its physical objects relating to the cultural and social components of each community (Fithian and Powell, 2011, p. 2). These values,

in all their levels, are considered as decisive rules and mechanisms for the generation of meaning in everyday life. They depend, in some sense, on past knowledge and experiences, as an expression of personal identity, and consequently enable shared values to be continued as rules and codes for present and future developments (Rapoport, 1998, p. 4; Morely and Robins, 1995, p. 46). Lack of continuity of socio-cultural aspects and memory, according to John Locke (2010, pp.112-113), in some cases, reflects the absence of the personal identity. Past experiences, according to Lawrence (1983), have a strong impact on peoples' priorities with regard to the spatial organisation of home (Al-Naim, 2006, p. 108-109). Dovey (1985, p. 35) confirms this view in his argument that "*homes of our past set the ground for our very perceptions of attractiveness and ugliness*". Furthermore, culture seems to be external, inclusive and lasting over generations, while the collective memory relates to a certain social group and particular historical events (Fithian and Powell, 2011, pp. 2-3). Memory, as an abstract notion, constitutes an important role in shaping a sense of identity. On the other hand, collective memory is viewed as an essential resource that can be used by people in defining and controlling their personal identity (Al-Naim, 2006, p. 105). Therefore, the cohesion of the collective identity, as Morely and Robins (1995, p. 46) stated, "*... must be sustained through time, through a collective memory, through lived and shared traditions, and through the sense of a common past and heritage*". What is important in this approach is the classification of memory, presented by Ian M.L. Hunter (1957, p.37), into three main phases. The first one is the *learning* level which requires time and involves a complex set of activities. The final phase is the *remembering* level which requires also a complex list of activities; learning is one of them. The third phase is the *interfering* level which aims to preserve and maintain the interval or the gap between the first and last. It relates to the period required for people to absorb new issues. Initial learning phase can be manifested by the familiarity with the previous home environment. This can clearly appear in the case of the traditional courtyard house, where people have a certain idea or knowledge of its objects when determining and defining the meaning of personal and collective identities in traditional contexts (Fithian and



Figure 2.9: Patterns of the social everyday life in the traditional neighbourhood unit (*mahalla*), Baghdad-Iraq

Powell, 2011, p. 4). Memory is, therefore, static and limited within the previous initial knowledge of society by reference to specific elements of the built and home environment. In contrast, culture is dynamic, active and divergent through the integrated process of its different components, people's behaviour, human actions and social aspects. These two issues are integrated in a way that enables both of them to take advantages of prior knowledge in the provision of new frameworks for future developments.

According to this discussion, identity represents one of the important problems facing our architecture and home environments. Most of the Arab societies disregard the role of social and cultural values in creating or preserving a specific form of identity. Next part of research problem concerns the meaning and possibility of these values in the provision of appropriate approach to achieving sustainability in current and future developments.

2.4. Socio-Cultural Values of the Traditional home Environment

Most scholarly studies are based on environmental and economic factors in analysing the traditional home environment with the omission of socio-cultural values, which are the result of generations of practices and events in the creation of such an environment. Due to the rapid changes in most Arab cities, people's inherited socio-cultural values and practices are threatened by the impact of many economic and political variables (Al-Naim, 2006, p. 36). Moreover, recommendations and solutions, had been put on the basis of taking advantages of alien trends and attitudes in dealing with this context, have developed extreme problems. Thus, it is necessary to shed light on the meaning of culture and its importance in the formation of such contexts.

Culture ranges from high implicit and abstract level to low explicit and concrete level, and reflects norms, ideologies and values. Culture, according to Maïke Malda (2009, p. 9), can be perceived at various levels, and is reflected in each and every one of us. Donald L. Johnson (1977) asserts that the form of the built environment is constructed by the culture of the population, and is the outcome of thousands of acts and practices conducted in (Soud, et al., 2010, p. 45). Home and extended public spaces are the embodiment of socio-cultural aspects, daily practices and rituals of their users. They are the outcome of a mutual relation between individuals' personal and interpersonal spheres. These aspects are the result of many intellectual rules and customs where religious principles play a major role in organising and controlling them (Malda, 2009, pp. 10-12). However, the questions, can be conducted, are; '*What are these values?*'; '*What are their role and their impact in shaping the built environment?*' and '*What is the role of these values in the creation of sustainability?*' These questions form and identify this part of the research problem. Several authors have discussed the value of or the need for a home that is culturally acceptable (Smith, 2006, p. 1). The discussion will investigate the concept of culture and culture-environment relationship. It will grasp the reciprocal man-environment relationship in all its variables that articulate this very human institution. Within this context, cultural factors encompass a set of standard meanings and concepts including moral and aesthetic elements, while social factors include individual's beliefs and everyday life. The latter detects the presence of human

beings, the reality of their daily lives and surrounding contexts, and explanations behind supposed architectural and spatial settings.

Culture is a complicated approach in architecture and urban form. Its role in performing and preserving a sustainable built environment cannot be ignored or marginalised. Memory, collective memory and culture are integrated in a way that enabling them to take advantages of prior knowledge in the formation of new developments. These factors are important in producing an information base for grasping the cultural and social values of the traditional house (Boudiaf, 2010, p. 63). The concept of home, as a reflection of intangible socio-cultural values, is considered implicitly and explicitly since Amos Rapoport in (1969) had published his book "*House Form and Culture*". His exploratory analysis and personal interpretations have asserted the fundamental role and influence of cultural values on the architecture of the house. In his book, Rapoport challenges the arguments of several studies of how structural materials, environmental possibilities and economic factors are the main determinants of building designs. This work shows the primacy of cultural values; while other principles (building materials, economics, etc.) are considered as modifying elements, and come at a secondary interest. According to Rapoport (1969, p. 61), home is the physical and formal expression of a set of social and cultural principles and variables. Built environment accordingly can be understood according to a system of social and cultural settings including; human basic needs, family, the position of women, privacy and social intercourse. Some of these factors encompass many sub-variables which are dependent.

The first value, "*human needs*", has an effective role in the architecture of home. If we consider something as basic in specific terms, we will become aware of its complex effects on the built form. Human basic needs differ from culture to culture in their specific impact on the built form and space organisation. Although the '*family*' is basic, its socio-cultural aspects and view towards society and social requirements determine the way the family presents itself within the community. Family structure, as an influential factor in determining house form, reveals great differences which are of significant impact in relation to house forms that differ equally so much. There may be different forms influenced by this factor even if they relate to a specific type of family structure. The cultural background of individuals is illustrated by the form and spatial arrangement of the house. Although the '*role of women*' is part of the family system, it is important to show the degree of specificity needed in discussing this factor, especially in traditional societies. Islamic culture affects, in general, the home environment through the demands and position of the harem (women) in drafting architectural and spatial solutions. This can be clearly viewed in the design and organisation of space in the traditional home in Iraq. Since "privacy", as the fourth factor according to Rapoport's classification, is at least partly affected by the position of women, there are considerable variations in its definitions or the way it is achieved at the scale of the house or the urban fabric. The desire for privacy may also take many forms related to the separation of public/private domains. Spatial organisation of previous domains reflects the degree of privacy achieved. Houses in traditional contexts face largely inwards achieving an introverted form of arrangement where *closedness* is the main regulatory element, in contrast with *openness* in contemporary patterns. On the other hand, transitional realms between open, narrow and

shady outdoor alleys, which are full of life as they serve various social functions, and internal private spheres of the house became crucial with regard to privacy. Although architects often refer to privacy as a basic need, it is, in fact, a complex and varied phenomenon. This notion will be discussed thoroughly in the following chapter when analysing the built environment. Since man has been defined as a social animal, gathering of people and social interaction between them, as introduced by Rapoport, is accordingly an influential need. Most important in this topic is space where people are used to gathering in, whether in the house itself, the café, the *hammam* (bath), the street or transitional spaces within the morphological limits of the neighbourhood (*mahalla*). Social intercourse, not the fact of meeting itself, in all its different patterns specifies the nature of space, and thus affects house form. Therefore, relationships and interconnectedness between the various socio-spatial elements will be entirely the principles of approaching an adequate built form (Rapoport, 1969, pp. 61-68).

Rapoport's problem, according to Roderick J. Lawrence (1987), is that the former has employed and used general terms to formulate his "*genre de vie*" concept in analysing the influence of socio-cultural factors on the architecture of the house. These issues cannot always explain how specific houses are designed, built and used because there is no guarantee or evidence that these factors have a spatial composition, or can prove the existence of an inevitable relation between spatial parameters and social values within the context of housing planning (Lawrence, 1987, p. 78). This argument, which is the outcome of a comparative analysis of different cultures, asserts that as long as the universal concept of Rapoport is applicable, then the same content, in other socio-cultural contexts, is expected to be assumed or proven. Irwin Altman, (1977, pp. 79-80), contradicts Rapoport's perspective when he insisted that privacy, for example, exists in all cultures as a behavioural mechanism used to confirm and regulate its desired and specified levels. Understanding this mechanism is important in defining and regulating privacy contextually and temporally. Same can be said and proven with respect to other cultural factors. Generalisation is considered by Lawrence as a failure in demonstrating how these factors can be implicated and employed in the architecture of the house. Despite this generalisation, these values, according to Clifford Geertz (1973), are fundamental factors in terms of their functional impact on the spatial organisation of the built environment. This can be achieved by limiting, specifying and demonstrating mutual connections between people and the surrounding environment (Lawrence, 1987, pp. 80-81). Therefore, it is necessary to employ a set of conceptual tools that define the complementary relationship between these factors in a specific context. There should also be a systematic way of assuming clear framework for understanding the historical development of the built environment within a specified period of time.

2.4.1. Conceptualisation of Culture

All human groups and individuals possess culture. Culture is rather complex with a wide range of definitions; a large number of literatures have dealt with it from different points of view (Rapoport, 1986, pp. 50-51). Clear definition of the term '*culture*' is necessary even if it can be used without

further explanations or clarifications. Its definition returns historically back to the nineteenth century, when Edward B. Tylor (1871, cited in Malda, 2009, p. 9) in his book *"Primitive Culture"*, defines it as "... *that complex which largely includes knowledge, belief, art, morals, customs and any other capabilities and habits acquired by the individual as a fundamental member of society*". This definition is so wide and general that can cover different meanings and fields. The UNESCO report (1995) also dealt with culture as a repository of knowledge, meanings and values that permeate and encapsulate all aspects of life. It clarifies the way human beings live and interact with each other both at home and urban scales (UNESCO, 1995; Duxbury and Gillette, 2007, p. 4). It specifies, in addition, ways of life, basic human rights, traditions, beliefs and value systems (Altman and Chemers, 1994, p. 3). This concept creates some kind of continuity of knowledge, values, activity systems and meanings in time and place maintaining accordingly the intellectual heritage of traditional built forms. It enhances the idea of home as a container of social, cultural and behavioural values with all their components and variables. Sinem Kultur (2012, p. 262) states that culture is not static and is expressed dynamic field illustrated by the society and the individual, conceived with every member, shared with groups and transferred from one generation to another. This view emphasises Fithian and Powell's approach to continuity in the cultural variables and built forms, and thus to create an identity. In this vein, culture retains the identity of groups within the single biological species, humans belong. The distinction between culture and the surrounding, that changes very quickly, is so beneficial for analysis and design of the built environment (Rapoport, 1998, p. 4).

Culture, according to Rapoport (1986, p. 161), performs the base that could be taken as a reference in drawing the spatial organisation of human activities or the morphology of the whole urban fabric. This topic includes the ways used by people in shaping, using and evaluating their environment, and describes mutual interactions between each other and the surrounding environment at the household level, the neighbourhood and the whole urban fabric. The second issue, according to Clifford Geertz (1993, pp. 4-5), introduces culture as a controlling mechanism that holds information in space and time sequence. Culture determines how individual's behaviour should be, and therefore takes the responsibility for the transfer of this information through various artefacts and behavioural means, including the restructuring of the house and the built environment. The third approach reveals culture as a framework or structure that gives meaning to particulars which, in turn, reflect the physical meaning of the built environment. This interpretation can be shown in the continuity of the traditional elements of the house and the spatial sequence of the whole urban fabric. It defines the different levels of space from the major one to the intimate space of the house, as well as the social sphere for each level (Rapoport, 1986, pp. 161-163).

Study of collective representation and its symbolic meanings, according to Emil Durkheim ({1955} 1983), occupies a significant role in understanding social values (Mestrovic, 1993, p. 13). Max Weber looks at sociology as part of *"cultural sciences"* which involves meanings and tracks relevant interpretations related to the society in which taking place. Modern sociology proposes and operates ideas, words and a set of symbolic systems derived from the society or the social

group in which they arise out. Bellington *et al.* (1991) argue that development and using the word 'culture' refers to people's values, ideas and beliefs about their communities, different social changes that lead to an *ideal society* (Bellington *et al.*, in Giddens, 2001, p. 17). This complex, which refers to humankind as the main source that addressing culture, includes knowledge, beliefs, morals, customs, art, law and other factors. It contains moreover habits and customs acquired by a member of a particular community. Contemporary societies, according to sociological and anthropological approaches, are revealed as "*unique social entities*", rather than the sum total of individual activities. On the other hand, psychological perspective introduces social and cultural factors as important determinants of human actions. Social activities cannot be perceived without understanding the cultural beliefs, customs and values of these activities. In this vein, culture, as addressed by Alfred L. Kroeber in 1969, is learned and transmitted through the individual and groups in society. American anthropologist Clyde Kluckhohn states that culture is dynamic, and is designed to represent the concept of living, which was built through the historical processes to identify the individual within the group (Giddens, 2001, p. 17-18). Simply put, people's behaviour in a specific context or situation follows the cultural norms and values of society ensuring therefore built environmental and societal stability. Thus, individual's social actions maintain the entire social system in a way of life that '*without it there can be no society, and without society there can be no social action*' (Bellington *et al.*, in Giddens, 2001, pp. 19-20).

2.4.2. Social, Culture and Environment

These are many ways to define the meaning of environment. The first method in doing so defines "*environment*" as the organisation of space, time, meaning and communication. Each topic cannot stand alone, but in an integrated relationship with others to give a clear concept. Built environment emphasises the complementary concept in dealing with and exercising these topics. It is considered as a cultural landscape composed of fixed, semi-fixed and non-fixed components. These elements have some features that provide a clear indication to distinguish them through the provision of people and people, people and things, and things and things relations (Rapoport, 1986, p. 161). Individuals, their properties, relations and products are, in fact, introduced as indicators or referents for the collective meaning of the term "*culture*". Differences in individuals and groups reflect in turn the variety in the built environment, with the presence of homogeneity, constancy and uniformity among traditional groups. These principles are connected with each other in a similar way to which social, cultural and spatial variables are inherently connected (Perkins, *et al.*, 2002, pp. 342-348). Irvin Altman (1994) emphasises the role of the environment as a powerful determinant of customs, lifestyles and behaviours in different cultures. Some reveal the strong relationship between culture-environment in which environmental phenomena are powerful in the development of cultural behaviour. In this approach, the physical environment is viewed as a determining, limiting and affecting process for human socio-cultural behaviour, relations and practices. This constitutes *determinism* level of environmental attitudes as introduced by Rapoport (1977) (Boudiaf, 2010, p. 60). Integrating social aspects into each level of

this conceptual sequence is essential in determining the entire structure of the built environment. This implies that the built environment needs to be dismantled, like culture and social issues, to make it easy to relate each component to specific social and cultural aspect. For example, each activity system of the home has specific form and space which, in a certain time, can set a system of communications with others and constitute their meanings. Culture alone cannot provide a sufficient built form, but its variables and aspects, such as privacy, can be described through specific architectural details or spatial arrangements (Rapoport, 1998, pp. 4-6). Neighbourhood (*mahalla*) in Iraq promotes stable and mutual social relations supported by a significant spatial order accommodates both private and public activities. In this venue, cultural, social and environmental factors are inseparable and intertwined in the formation of the whole structure.

In relation to the previous discussion, culture or, more specifically, its variables relate to some components of the built environment, but through people, their actions and behaviours. Culture is intangible and carries in the minds of people who actively perceive, judge and act. These three verbal settings summarise the fundamental levels of human action and behaviour. Everything in the built environment relates to the concept of human action, and reflects the tangible impact of culture or its variables (Rapoport, 1986, pp. 161-162). At the same time and from the opposite side, the built environment can be used as effectively as a transmitter of culture, and serves as one of its elements. Human action and behaviour, according to Peter F. Smith (2006, pp. 12-13), are influenced by the environment. Smith presents three types of human-environment relations, including *human response*, *interaction* and *stimulus* that reflect sequentially *phenomenal*, *personal* and *contextual* environments. The first reveals the *human environment*, which consists of people as subjects. The third is the *physical environment*, known as the *built environment*, which encompasses all other objects in their architectural terminologies. *Personal environment*, which, according to Kurt Lewin (1936), symbolises the *behavioural environment*, is influenced by *individual's personality, a complex of attitudes, beliefs, dispositions, preferences and values* accumulated largely from individual's experiments (Smith, 2006, pp. 142-144).

2.5. The Approach to Sustainability

Sustainability is an important issue in the field of architecture and urban form. It plays a specific role and most challenging approach that facing designers and planners whose main interests are concerned with the formation of the different factors of the built environment (Nurse, 2006, pp. 33-34). Keith Nurse (2006, p. 33) introduces culture as the fourth pillar of sustainability detecting, according to Raymond Williams (1981), the '*whole social order*' meaning of sustainability. In response to this notion, the research will go in line with the concept, introduced by Rebecca L.H. Chiu (2004, pp. 67-68), proposing that sustainable perspective credits integrative approach of most inquiries with regard to home. Social and cultural issues are important components for the achievement of sustainability. These factors are intertwined with each other, difficult to separate, and are often considered together. Their dimensions are interconnected in a manner that reveals their mutual influence on society. They are indeed partially dismantled into values, norms,

customs, social intercourse and lifestyle. Common fields between these types are those related to socio-cultural limits of sustainable development (Cooper, 2006, p. 84). In this vein, Development (and/or growth), that corresponds to the harmonic development of civil society, promotes, according to Andrea Colantonio (2007), an environment conducive to a compatible coexistence between different groups socially and culturally, while enhancing social interaction and integration, with improvements in life quality for all community segments (Colantonio, 2007, pp. 4-5).

Despite the intensive studies on the sustainable aspects of the house that dealing with physical and environmental sustainable properties, little are conducted in investigating social and cultural potentials of traditional settlements. These built environments display significant contextual fields for the discussion and analysis of socio-cultural connections and disconnections of the family, community and human being (Tuedio, 2002, p. 201). Spatial organisation of the traditional environment and its physical form demonstrate influential settings in society's cultural expressions. They translate and utilise social, cultural and structural values in physical components and spaces that are crucial to the dynamics and continuity of daily life (Taleb, 2006, p. 5). Many scholarly studies adopt the concept of everyday life stressing on its significance in the creation of a sustainable environment. Socio-spatial approach occupies a prime criterion for sustainability due to its primary focus on the concept of human settlements, which, according to Hanan M. Taleb (2006, p. 6), mirror the truth of social association, as opposed to the aftereffect of political or specialized aggression. Home performs a huge platform where various aspects of sustainability; those of economic development, environmental preservation and socio-cultural equity, can show their inseparable relationships by the self-conscious balance of competing interests within the community. Social and cultural sustainability diverge, where "social well-being" and "culture" respectively become sustainability subjects. It can be proposed that sustainable development perspective offers an integrative approach to housing inquiries (Chiu, 2004, p. 68).

This part will investigate the problem of sustainability and hence tackle the role of social and cultural sustainable strands in the organisation of space to find out whether Iraqi traditional houses achieved these aspects spatially and architecturally, and how their potentials can be utilised in our approach to a more sustainable living environment. Furthermore, the reflection of the spatial arrangement of the traditional house, the morphology of the traditional urban form will be discussed thoroughly. This attitude will show how the sequence and organisation of social spaces have been affected by social and cultural relations between the compositional elements (people and people, people and things and things and things).

2.5.1. The Problem of Sustainability

Each society has its own values and beliefs which need to be maintained and continued. The main aim of the research is to identify sustainable potentials that can be derived from latent aspects of the traditional home. Traditional built environment represents a significant context where most of the living practices and activities take place. Home is an important unit in the urban fabric which can largely reveal the notion of sustainability in all its components and issues.

Emphasis of Brundtland's report (1987), "*humanity has the ability to make development sustainable - to ensure that it meet the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs*", is in achieving the '*human need*', and to allow reasonably comfortable way of life (Williamson, et al., 2004, pp. 4-5). Basic human needs incorporate three main groups: economic, environmental and social. The main objective of sustainable design is to provide architectural proposals that can provide well-being of the population through the coexistence of these three different constituent groups (Kim, 1998, p. 6). Most of the studies, with reference to this notion, concern largely environmental or, sometimes, economic properties despite the centrality of home to the values and principles of sustainable living. Little has been made about the phenomenon of home and the way it accordingly works. The reason behind this is the powerful impact of political and economic institutions, which are outside research scope, in blocking any effort or attempt to analyse or investigate this phenomenon. This thought can be realised in most Arab societies to a degree that the question, concerning the house, has become: "*Where do you live?*" instead of "*How do you live?*" (Douglas, 1991, p. 289; Abdelmonem, 2011a, p. 2).

The research will identify the problem through analysing the notion of sustainability from its social and cultural issues. It will investigate people's socio-cultural aspects and socio-spatial interactions within the confines of the house and the *mahalla* to provide a sustainable socio-spatial association in everyday life. Concerned fields of the study will be discussed arguing that the various activity systems of the home and its spatial arrangement are significantly determined and promoted by former factors (Moore, 2007, pp. 2-3). This part sheds some light on the problem by analysing the sustainable potentials of socio-cultural values in order to create a database or broad platform to re-employ them, if applicable, in our approach to a more sustainable living environment.

2.5.2. An Overview of Sustainability

The idea of sustainability has occupied a large concentration in the strategies of different governments since the 80's of the last century. This incremental attention came as a result of many attempts of environmental protection movements in the period between the 1960's and 70's of the last century (Chiu, 2004, p. 66). According to the recommendations of these movements, the 1972 UN Stockholm Conference on the Human Environment, which was considered as the first international conference, brought the concept of sustainability to the international arena. However, there is a general consensus that 1987's World Commission on Environment and Development (WCED) was the first in taking the responsibility for achieving an integrated intellectual framework and conceptual relations between sustainable concerns and development outcome in all its aspects and categories, where architecture occupies a key corner of them (Nurse, 2006, p. 34).

WCED (1987) has forth-introduced a specific definition of 'sustainability' as: '*meeting the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own*

needs' (Nurse, 2006, p. 33; Kim, 1998, p. 6). The report consists, highly and with striking certainty, of planet's major and persistent environmental problems presented by the concept of inequality. This concept has been addressed as a matter of priority in all sustainable approaches, developments and debates (Anton, 2012, p. 68; WCED, 1987). Triangulated concept, which is the result of "*Our Common Future*"; the Brundtland Report (1987), as it called forwards, generates the logic that formulates the whole concept of sustainable development. It is basically conceptualised and measured throughout several institutions as a key element of this concept (Moore, 2007, pp. 2-3). Jong-Jin Kim (1998, pp. 6-7) argues that this definition did not give an idea about the ethical roles of the humans for their existence on the planet. The challenge for long-term solutions to allow human existence and well-being to be continued is more persuading and of a benefit than to give adequate terminologies to describe human need. Rio declaration on environment and development, which was held in June 1992 at Rio de Janeiro - Brazil under the name '*The Earth Summit*', has articulated an action plan consisting of 27 principles as a blueprint for sustainable development to be achieved in the 21st century. It is commonly referred to as Agenda 21, and first conceptualised sustainability as a triangle of competing interests. It has stated in its first principle that '*Human-beings and their different demands are at the centre of concerns for sustainable development*' (Williamson, *et al.*, 2004, p. 5; Anton, 2012, p. 68).

According to Philip R. Berke and Maria Manta (2000, cited in Moore, 2007, pp. 1-2), "*sustainable development is... a dynamic procedure in which communities foresee and oblige the requirements of present and future eras in ways that recreate and adjust local, social, economic, and ecological systems, and link local actions to global concerns*". Scholars and supporters of sustainable developments, as the '*three-legged stools*', confirm that sustainability cannot take its role, as a whole, without an equal help from the three constituents of social networks which suggest the crucial interests of ecology, economy and equity (Figure 2.10). Architects' and planners' role, according to Scott Campbell (1996), is to mediate and stabilise the circumstances of the conflict in order to achieve sustainable communities (Moore, 2007, pp. 1-5).

Coherent combination of social equity and environmental protection is the most crucial issue in achieving sustainability. The former concerns the utilisation of privacy, safety, security, human health and well-being of the human; while the latter deals with consuming natural resources, energy efficiency, and environmental impact on the biodiversity of habitats (El-Demery, 2010, p. 101). Transitions of social and environmental issues with all their complexities and ambiguities are displayed largely in the transformation of the approach towards the development of sustainable architecture and built environment (Guy, 2011, p. 141). Environmental factor has been studied extensively and intensively while limited pieces of literatures are focused on social and cultural sustainability to the extent that a comprehensive study of these concepts is still missing. Most scholarly studies, about the traditional environment, take physical and environmental treatments in their approaches with no reference to the impact of social values and cultural beliefs on the sustainability and continuity of this environment. Focus of this thesis is based on the role of later values in achieving a more sustainable development. It investigates their role in the physical formation and spatial organisation of the traditional home environment in Iraq. It discusses initially

the general concepts of social and cultural sustainability and identifies areas common to these concepts (Chiu, 2004, p. 66).

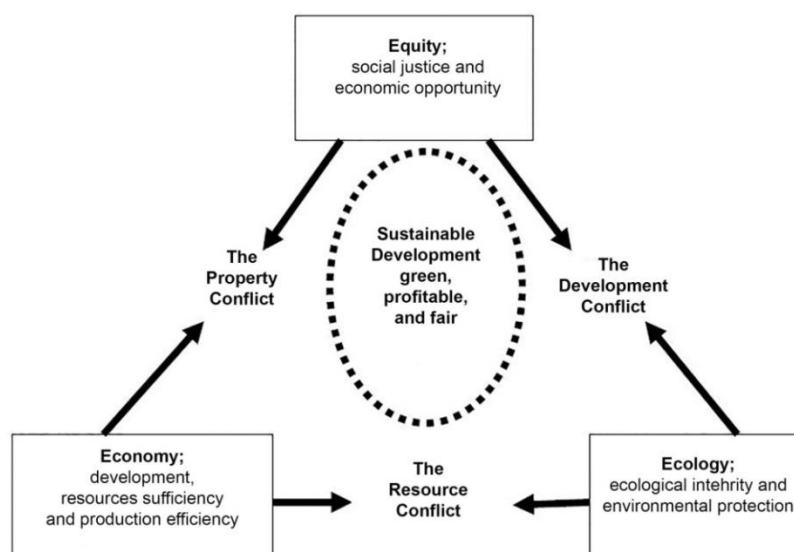


Figure 2.10: The relationship between the three competing interests of the concept of sustainability according to Scott Campbell (1996). (Source: Moore, 2007, p. 5)

2.5.3. The Concept of Social Sustainability

Social factor occupies a specific role in the triangular plan of sustainability. Andrea Colantonio, in (2007, p. 6), argues that sustainability relates primarily to personal and societal assets, habits, customs, rules and processes. These factors empower individuals and communities to participate in the long-term and fair achievement of adequate life based on self-expressed needs and aspirations within the physical boundaries of places. To sustain any development socially is to keep it to specific social relations, customs, values, interactions and structures. In this respect, Michael Thaman in 2002 (cited in Chiu, 2004, p. 68), contested that: *“to be sustainable is to be rooted in people’s social and cultural values”*. The second interpretation aims to implement some kind of social cohesion and integrity, social stability and improving the quality of life. Social equality needs correspondingly to be achieved in terms of social inclusion among all strata of society, and social continuity. This kind of interpretation is people-oriented approach as long as it refers to maintain and improve people’s well-being (Chiu, 2004, pp. 67-68). Last interpretation is the environment-oriented attitude where ecological sustainability is the main focus, where *rules and values within a social context determine*, according to Brundtland report, *how natural resources and assets are distributed within and between generations*” (WCED, 1987, p. 54).

In response to these interpretations, social dimension occupies a fundamental value in achieving a sustainable built environment. It relates entirely to the improvement of community values, its political issues and many ethical principles that affecting social relations between community members. Equity is interrelated with and integral to social aspects as it asserts the satisfaction of basic human needs within the community (Nurse, 2006, p. 38). These values are

showed and practised largely in the architecture of the house and spatial morphology of the *mahalla* in Iraqi traditional environments. These contexts have, as argued by Mark Roseland in (2005), “*the ability to maintain and build on their own resources*” for centuries, and “*resiliency to prevent and/or address problems in the future*”, creating thus integrated and highly organised built environments. Similarly, Maureen Williams, (2003), affirmed that traditional communities demonstrate the ability to manage distinctive changes and to adjust to new circumstances which are vital to the coherence and dynamicity of social and cultural aspects (Duxbury and Gillette, 2007, p. 3). In line with Mario Pole’sse and Richard E. Stren (2000), the architecture of the home and spatial sequence of social spaces in traditional environments are consistent with the congruous development of the community, enhancing a conducive environment to the proper existence of culturally and socially varied segments within the boundaries of the *mahalla*. In spite of this diversity, this context shows and fosters, as argued by Jeffrey Sachs (1999) an integral society that enhancing cultural interaction and homogeneity with improvements in life quality of life for all strata of the community (Polese and Stren, 2000, p. 1516). These values are reflected in the daily practice of family and community members within different social spaces of the house and the *mahalla*, promoting thus the concept of everyday life as an important approach to the sustainable environment. This process illustrates intensively social cohesion and interaction within families and communities and empowers a sense of belonging to the place, creating thus a specific identity (Forrest and Kearns, 2001, p. 2128). This position has been revealed in Vancouver model of social sustainability in placing main daily themes and practices to move closer to equity, inclusion, security and adaptability (Figure 2.11).

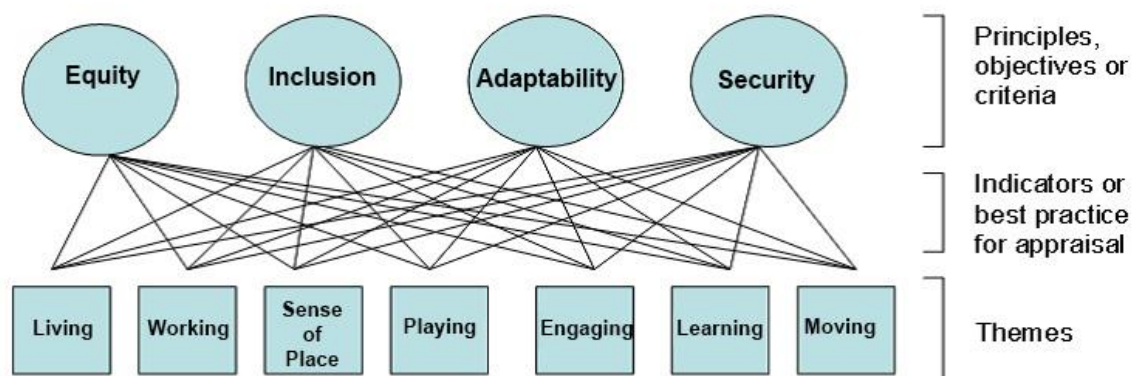


Figure 2.11: Social sustainability according to Vancouver model (Colantonio and Dixon, 2010)

2.5.4. The Importance of Culture in Sustainability

Studies of two decades past concerning the notion of sustainability have considered ‘culture’ as the basis for sustainability. Sustainability, according to Rebecca L. H. Chiu (2004, p. 68), is rooted in the cultural values of the individual and human group. It is broadly defined as being the entire complex of unmistakable profound, material, scholarly and enthusiastic components that portray people and society. It incorporates expressions of the human experience and letters, as well as

modes of life, central privileges of the individual, value systems, customs and convictions” (UNESCO, 1995; Duxbury and Gillette, 2007, p. 4).

In dismantling the concept of culture, Amos Rapoport, in (2001), described two particular components to demonstrate the genuine importance and meaning of culture. They are the social factor and ideological dimension. The former includes kinship, family structure, identity, status and social network; while the latter encompasses values, ideals, images, norms, standards, rules and expectations. Culture unpacking shows how social values are important in cultural approaches, and how they both illustrate inseparable elements and principles for our approach towards sustainability (Chiu, 2004, p. 67). This approach illustrates anthropological viewpoint, which is one of the important criteria covered by the concept of sustainability, in terms of the way of life and social aspect of human behaviour. It includes morals, values, laws, codes, customs, traditions, heritage, lifestyle and the ways we socialise with each other within specific social structures. Respectively, it summarises the whole socio-cultural dimension in a specific society (Chiu, 2004, p. 69). Scott Campbell's triple bottom line's model of the sustainable environment has been rearticulated to encompass culture besides other factors to maintain the well-being of society (Figure 2.12).



Figure 2.12: Four well-being's model of sustainable community (Duxbury and Gillette, 2007, p.15)

The main objective is in mediating factors and competing priorities in the search for the value represented in the centre of the model (Guy, 2005, pp. 470-471). Duxbury and Gillette, in (2007), argued that culture is an essential value that allowing change to be instructed in a coherent way with people's cultural values providing a specific identity to the place over time. Culture-place-time relationship is inseparable from and enriched by the social properties of society. It emphasises the dynamicity of culture, as discussed earlier, over the course of time. It maintains its diversity along with social history, traditions with social values and heritage with place categories (Chiu, 2004, p. 68). These values are inherited in tangible and intangible forms from the past and passed through onto future generations fostering thus privacy and social inclusion, social interaction and public relationships and ecological preservation (Duxbury and Gillette, 2007, p. 5). The case of the residential complex "Hamada *Suq* (market)" in the Karkh district of Baghdad, which was built in

the 80's of the last century as will be discussed forward, exemplifies the attempts to take advantages of the physical components derived from the traditional heritage in the design and use of home in contemporary housing developments (Abdul Wahab, 2009, pp. 161-164).

Such critiques led the approach towards an alternative framework where culture is introduced as a key factor and fully integrated with other principles in the search for the conceptualization of the meaning of sustainability (Figure 2.13). This approach is utilised in a way presenting; (a) a specific cultural identity where social elements are rooted in cultural values; (b) a self-reliance community which depends mainly on its social and cultural resources; (c) the concept of social justice which gives priority to those most in need; (d) and finally, an ecological balance of different resources (Nurse, 2006, p. 38). This attitude demonstrates the utilisation of cultural aspects as balancing issues between externally imposed changes and internally developed environments (Vallance *et al.*, 2011, p. 343).

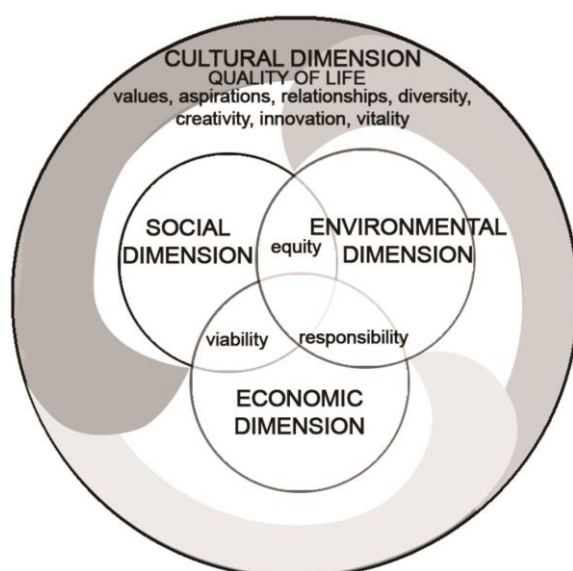


Figure 2.13: Four-pillars/dimensions' model of sustainability (Runnalls, 2006, cited in Duxbury and Gillette, 2007, p.14)

2.5.5. Common social and cultural aspects of sustainability

Social aspects and cultural beliefs are interwoven with each other, difficult to separate and are often considered together due to interlocking and integrated impact of these principles or criteria on society. They are partially dismantled into social values, cultural beliefs, norms, customs, social structure and lifestyle and so on. Common fields between them are those related to the social and cultural boundaries of the sustainable environment. Social factors present the social well-being of people, while cultural elements show the continuation of culture as an important principle in achieving and performing a specific identity. In his study of the social and cultural principles of sustainability in the housing sector, Chiu in (2003) asserted that the social dimension encompasses the following four aspects: (a) social requirements and preconditions which lead to the use of sustainable environments; (b) justice in the distribution and consumption of different resources and assets; (c) harmonious social interactions and relationships between users of the

residential district; and (d) an acceptable quality of housing conditions (Chiu, 2004, p. 69). First and fourth factors are also related to cultural dimensions including the preservation and maintenance of traditional properties and housing heritage as well. In the residential complex of "Haifa Street" in Baghdad, a decision was taken to confirm the cultural dimension through accurate processing of traditional structures reflecting mutual relations between the values of different social and cultural principles.

There are also some differences in the manifestation of social and cultural factors. Social dimensions are intangible and cover many levels of privacy, social cohesion, social stability, social equality, social equity, and social inclusion and so on; while cultural values are more tangible and include rituals, customs, habits, religion and religious practices and so on. In spite of the overlapping issues between them, they are in fact not the same and each relates to specific areas of concern. This kind of separation or distinction can be clearly highlighted in the architecture of the house where residents' traditions and customs determine distinctly its order and arrangement. Design and use of the house reflect commonly this diversity and integrated relations (Chiu, 2004, pp. 68-69). Privacy, for example as a social issue in Iraqi traditional contexts, affects the spatial organisation and functional performance of the space of the entrance, which led to a bent form for preventing any kind of direct visual intrusion from strangers or guests outside the house. At the same time, private domain of the main family space or the courtyard turns into a public space, and can be simply accessed by guests in sorrow and joy festivals, religious events and so on. Opposite sex in such circumstances uses social spaces on the first floor to watch and monitor those on the lower floor. Such practices enhance the integrated influence of social and cultural factors in the design and use of social spaces in the traditional house.

2.5.6. Sustainability in urban form

Sustainability, in all its principles especially social and cultural factors, demonstrates a key role in the formation of the built and urban environment through maintaining equity and social inclusion and diminishing environmental impacts. Fairness and validity of any built form depend largely on the achievement of a dynamic and continuous balance between these competing or conflicting issues. Meanwhile, social and cultural diversity implies a significant effect on the continuity and dynamic systems of the urban form, achieving a long-term health and validity. This diversity, as discussed earlier, highlights its ability to adapt to change (Dempsey and Jenks, 2005, p. 40). Stephen M. Wheeler's definition of the sustainable urban form includes a clear focus on the importance of social factors in achieving a more sustainable built form. He argued, in (1996), that sustainability is the development that includes long-term social and environmental health for built forms (Dixon, 2011, p. 4). This approach relies primarily on actions to be taken today, depending on existing and inherited values. By contrast, Curtis J. Richardson (1992) relies on the impact of the natural environment in the formulation and achievement of a more sustainable urban form. He explains the significance of the man-environment relationship, lifestyle and people's inspirations in drafting the main tools and correct settings for a sustainable built form (Parker, 2004, p. 167). This

approach presents, moreover, the socio-spatial factor in its investigation through the mutual relationship between humans and the surrounding environment.

To achieve a high quality of life for people in any context within a socio-cultural framework is a fundamental basis for a sustainable urban form. Wider meaning of these integrated factors determines human life, socio-spatial relation, social interaction and cultural values of the individual and society. Dempsey and Jenks (2005) state many social and cultural principles to be included in the context of sustainability. Their perspective is revealed by the '*polycentric form*' which is closely linked to appropriate public transport systems, allowing easy access and sustainable social and cultural behaviour, involving all the people who live there mainly (Clifton, 2010, p. 40; Dempsey & Jenks, 2005, p. 128). These properties highlight the concept of compactness as a new paradigm for and major factor to sustainability (Ben-Hamouche, 2008, p. 197). Wheeler (1996) goes to suggest the compact urban form as a fundamental approach to sustainable urban form, restoring natural systems and providing better living environments, healthy social ecology and good cultural preservations (Dixon, 2011, p. 4). This perspective recalls significantly the urban form and spatial organisation of the traditional neighbourhood (*mahalla*) in Iraq. This form displayed for several centuries a perfect example of homogeneous and reasonable socio-cultural relationships between its users, and organised sequence of narrow, bent and shaded streets and spaces (Al-Hemaidi, 2001, p. 180). Different potentials, such as access method, privacy, social segregation, social inclusion and interaction, can best depict it. This perspective ensures timely and easy access to all homes, workplaces, services, facilities and social spaces while respecting existing and inherited socio-cultural values, traditions and customs of the community. It provides, moreover, a cohesive manner for combining environmental thinkers with all socio-cultural planning factors (Dixon, 2011, pp. 3-4).

The traditional urban form displays a high variety of activities which give life to the community, and, thus, achieve the sustainability of the *mahalla* and whole urban fabric. The dimension of diversity was popularised by Jane Jacobs in (1961) and accepted by many scholarly studies and approaches to the built environment, such as the Smart growth, new urbanism and sustainable development. For Jacobs, this issue is vital and necessary to avoid the decline and deterioration of the built form of being an expression of just a place of living (Jabareen, 2006, p. 42). Diversity is a *multi-dimensional phenomenon* indicating some kind of similarities between this issue and the concept of mixed land uses in a specific context. This phenomenon promotes many essential features, different house's typologies, household sizes, cultures and social styles (Turner, Robyne, and Murray 2001, p. 320). It supports and maintains the socio-cultural factors of the built environment. In traditional contexts, diversity is promoted by the spatial and physical variety of building and urban properties which relied significantly on social and cultural values derived from Islamic culture, principles and elements. This variety shows a high degree of unity. By contrast, if these contexts are not diverse, according to Wheeler (2002, cited in Jabareen, 2006, p. 42), "*then homogeneity of built forms often produces unattractive, monotonous built form, a lack for housing for all income groups, class and racial segregation ...*" as is the case in most contemporary developments in the Arab world and Iraq in particular. Diversity in traditional contexts has inspired

many scholars in their attempts to better built forms on the basis of a neo-traditional approach to the employment of social, cultural and physical characteristics (Nasar, 2003, p. 58). This approach, which is well-known as the New Urbanism, is a design-oriented one which, according to Charles Bohl (2000), primarily depends on traditional precedents for the creation of adequate ways to connect housing types in the form of a neighbourhood. The latter displays the basic planning unit, which is limited in its physical size with the central public space and well-defined edges (Campbell & Fainstein, 2003, p. 181). Scholars of this approach believe in the need for diversity of residential features that can satisfy users, support good social contacts, achieve a strong sense of community and human interaction, and enhance relevant social and cultural relations rather than just super-blocks and typical residential units. Wheeler (2002) argues that diversity is among the most attractive, vibrant and popular concepts and requirements, instead of the institutional force of zoning which works against the diversity of the built form (Jabareen, 2006, pp. 43-44). This approach emphasises specific categories of sustainable urban form expressed in establishing a self-contained district promoting the concept of *mixed-land uses* in a tightly clustered context, and indicating the preferable of a *high-density* environment and *walkable* urban pattern. Application of the latter model demonstrates a variety of path options and sequential spatial order. It encourages social and cultural interaction among different types of public spaces (Nasar, 2003, pp. 58-60). The main problem of this movement, according to David Harvey (1997), is that New Urbanism gives little attention to social factors in terms of creating social inequalities, as is the case in modernism (Campbell & Fainstein, 2003, p. 183).

2.5.7. Sustainable Built Environment as a Socio-Cultural Entity

The importance of discussing sustainable home environment is to go beyond talking about the preservation of arts, heritage and architectural identity, and to include its main factors and values embodied in the notion of culture as a “*whole way of life*”. This meaning, according to Keith Nurse (2006, p. 36), informs the underlying belief system which articulates humans’ social and cultural relation and interaction with the surrounding environment. Most studies in the field of the traditional built environment have indicated the socio-cultural base of their approaches. Norberg-Schultz, in 1985, argued that each traditional context includes a set of ideals about the social and cultural system. The architecture of home is considered as an expression and reflection of a specific socio-cultural language. In tracing the history of a given society, social, cultural and intellectual development reveals an essential effect on its architecture, and formulates an adequate discussion with regard to its sustainable values. Physical and spatial properties of the house are formed by social values and cultural beliefs of its residents, and, therefore, the result of thousands of practices and events conducted in several generations (Soud, 2010, p. 45). Same can be said about the *mahalla* and entire urban fabric which reflect particular socio-cultural values and express the way in which aspects and values of that culture have evolved.

Egyptian architect Hassan Fathy, in his work to resettle the inhabitants of Gourni, had the opportunity to put in practice his theoretical ideas set forth in “*Architecture for the Poor*” (1973),

which was considered as an important handbook of the 20th century. In the village of new Gournia 1945-48, Fathy aimed to promote socio-cultural relations and interactions between inhabitants and surrounding spaces (Carter, 2007, pp. 3-4). He expressed his belief in the role of culture in the production of architecture through the practical integration between humans' socio-cultural beliefs and the surrounding environment. He argued that *the architecture of the house emerges from the dreams* of each individual which is the main reason beyond the fact that: '*in villages built by their inhabitants, we will find no two houses identical*' (Fathy, 1973, cited in Carter, 2007, p. 3). For him, people need to be appreciated and considered as individuals, and, therefore, the architecture of each house must reflect the character of its residents. Fathy called to the importance of villagers' participation in the planning, design and construction of their own home for the promotion and preservation of social and cultural meanings and interests of its users and thus meeting their needs and requirements. The use of local natural materials and architectural ideas, derived from the community, reveals the understanding of the social, cultural and natural basis of the environmental context (Soud, 2010, pp. 47-48). This socio-spatial approach or process could accordingly create a complex compound in which each unit varies spatially and functionally than others. Fathy argues that the primary role of the architect in the design process lies in refining, clarifying and simplifying users' concepts or ideas (Figure 2.14).

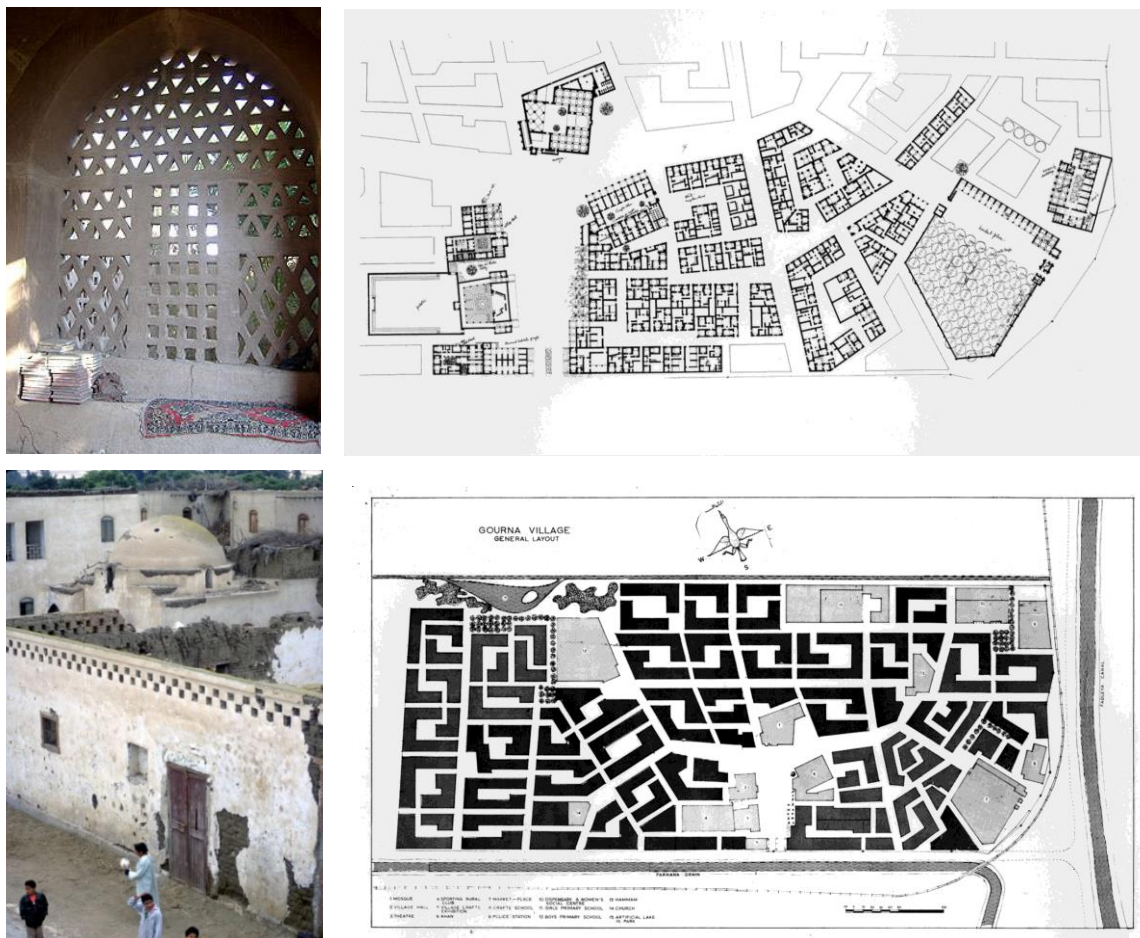


Figure 2.14: New Gournia Village by the architect Hasan Fathy (Different resources)

Many local components have been employed in the architecture of the Gourni's house and the whole built form, such as the courtyard, the wind catcher (*Malqaf*), the dome, the latticework wood screen (*Mushrabiyya* in the Egyptian culture) and the hierarchical spatial sequence of the alleys from the public to the private, as well as the existence of transitional realms. Semi-public space inside the house was diminished due to the strong and direct relationship of the Gourni with the outside open space. Fathi's concept of the social community depends, to a large extent, on the creation of small sub-communities or groups, called *Badanas*. *Badana* represents the semi-private social sphere around which a cluster of 4-5 houses is built. This space contains many gathering's tools for the use of the Gourni as sitting areas for washing and cooking requirements so that women can gather during the day for cooking and socialising. The spatial arrangement of these units achieves, according to Fathi's point of view, privacy, intimacy, safety and security, social interaction and other socio-cultural values and beliefs.

The problem that facing our society, at the beginning of the 20th century, was the loss of this prominence and status coincided with the rise of the new architectural trend. The architecture of the contemporary house and the *mahalla* is a clear manifestation of this impact. Contemporary examples show a great ignorance and neglect of identity (Soud, 2010, p. 45). The need, therefore, is to identify the underlying principles upon which spatial and physical features of the traditional built environment were constructed and formed.

2.5.8. Locality in sustainability

Rapid changes in many developing countries of the Arab world and Iraq, in particular, have produced certain home settlements which are noticeably different from traditional counterparts. In most cases, these changes pay little attention to structural, social, cultural and environmental local considerations. They take little account of the need for such environments, over the long term, to many influential aspects, in terms of sustainability and interactive growth. As a result, current built settlements are often alien and devoid of traditional values and qualities, causing thus a significant loss of identity and the deformation of traditional aspects (Taleb, 2006, p. 1). Looking for quick sustainable developments and solutions according to immediate and urgent needs has led to the imposition of alien models which are unfamiliar or incompatible with the authentic aspects of indigenous people.

It is important, in sustainable approaches, to discuss the necessity of local architecture, socially and culturally, as an essential issue in achieving sustainability. It demonstrates the significance of socio-cultural aspects of the traditional heritage and the methods adopted by people in taking advantage of these factors and values spatially and architecturally in their built and home environments. The local, according to many studies, is viewed as an essential socio-spatial resource in which a range of social, cultural, physical and institutional relations play a fundamental role in creating a more sustainable environment (Marvin and Guy, 1997, p. 312). Therefore, it may be rational to think globally, as is the case in most built developments, but it is so securely in acting locally in our approaches to creating sustainability (Chiu, 2004, pp. 68-69).

The local confirms the desire to maintain continuity and sustainability. People have a tendency to associate with valued parts of their local environment in their attempts to emphasise local attributes that demonstrate the importance of their cultural heritage. This issue has been tested for a long period of time under the influence of several social, cultural and environmental factors, which led to access to this kind of satisfaction or contentment in its significance. To be closer to this concept, most Arab societies suffer from the impact of modernization that led to a significant fraction in the continuity of inherited social and cultural aspects. Eldemery (2002, pp. 108-109) argues that the local must take the responsibility for bridging the gap, opened by historical conscious, between past and present through the creation of sustainable built environments which are faithful to tradition by encouraging the inspiration of inherited cultural aspects.

Synthesis

This chapter discusses the main problem of the research. It identifies the main topics that clarifying the main problem with reference to the traditional built environment. Its subdivisions include the concept of tradition, identity, sustainability and social and cultural factors. The chapter gives an overall idea of their role, definitions and impacts in the articulation of the traditional built environment. It addresses moreover their necessity in our approaches to sustainability.

The third part has discussed the importance of socio-cultural factors in currently approaches to sustainable built environments. The reasons behind the limited attention given to these factors are the difficulty in defining them and the invisible influence of their impact, which have let them work alone. This chapter moves the debates on and highlights the different complexities involved. Our discussion of social values relates to social equity, privacy, social inclusion and interaction and many other issues, in which cultural principles incorporate peoples' rituals, habits, customs and daily practices. The latter illustrates reciprocal man-environment relations, socio-spatial interrelated factors and the importance of time in the continuity and dynamicity of a specific built and urban form. It occupies a crucial role in identifying the sustainable aspects of the built form. Our argument is that the failure or success of the built environment depends largely on how this context achieves a daily vitality between its users and between them and spatial and physical components of the surrounding environment. This depends mainly on social values and cultural beliefs of community members. In traditional settlements, each corridor, corner, alley or street is full of life as they all have been formed and are formulated according to specific socio-cultural functions and values. At the same time, each residential unit reflects underlying socio-cultural beliefs and values.

Social and cultural factors of sustainability are integrated with each other in the architecture of the house and spatial organisation and functional arrangement of its different activities. On the other hand, they are quite different in their characteristics and principles where each comes into contact with a certain level of human aspects. Cultural and social values have formed, for several centuries, a wide base for the design and use of the traditional house and the *mahalla* in Iraq. Later built complexes have embodied a significant response to the socio-cultural values of their

users. A variety of physical, functional and spatial solutions of these contexts reflect the influence of these values at the scale of the house, as the base unit of the family, and the *mahalla*, as the fundamental planning unit at the macro level of the whole urban fabric. Introverted typology of the traditional house, the centrality of the main family space or the courtyard, bent form of the entrance, few and controlled outward openings, high parapet, the spontaneous sequence of spaces, socio-cultural role of transitional spaces and other tangible or intangible forms detect the positive influence of these values and beliefs. Consequently, unique form and specific identity have been formed as an outcome of these factors. Culture, as an important issue in any society, expresses many intellectual properties and involves a system of values, attitudes, rules and also beliefs and norms. It reflects, moreover, a great potential for change, and transmits the sustainability of vital community (Kultur, 2012, p. 262).

The traditional built environment reflects the remarkable impact of social and cultural values on architecture. The question now is; ***'how can these factors be re-utilised in contemporary developments instead of the negative impact of imported approaches and the total neglect of sustainable values of the traditional environment?'*** Neglect of these factors for the sake of new forms will diminish, in turn, our identity. Therefore, the main objective of this study is to identify and highlight social and cultural principles for the purpose of their re-employment in the production of sustainable building model and creation of a specific identity reflecting the inherited rich heritage. Social and cultural aspects of indigenous peoples provide a direct and easy access to sustainability rather than exotic solutions to their problems.

After analysing the nature and main concerns of the study, it will move forward to tackle research main aim through investigating the traditional built environment in Iraq. Next chapter constitutes the main part of the literature review where a thoroughly analytical discussion of many approaches to the built and home environment will be discussed and analysed to determine the one that will be relied on in the development of this study regarding Iraqi traditional environments.

CHAPTER III

STUDY OF TRADITIONAL HOME AND BUILT ENVIRONMENTAL APPROACHES

Introduction

This part of literature review concerns the traditional built environment and the different approaches to this field. The main purpose of such a review is to articulate and develop an attitude that will be useful in identifying research main question and objectives leading to the methodological part of the research. Meanwhile, this chapter will build a specific framework for the second part of the research represented in the empirical study. Case studies will be chosen with relation to concepts emerging from this part. Many scholarly studies depend on different attitudes and concepts in their analytical approaches to the home environment. This study will investigate some of them in order to create a specific attitude for the development of the study of the home environment. Built and spatial organisation of the traditional home environment will give an idea of underlying elements and factors that have the major role in shaping its specific built form.

Clear definition of the concept of tradition will be important in clarifying the meaning of home as research main context. The previous chapter presents the problem of tradition. It addresses the lack of clear understanding of its various principles and prominent influence in preserving and maintaining a more sustainable environment. This part will start by tackling this concept and its different definitions to develop a specific one which will support research main aim and objectives. In order to develop a home which is responsive to the social and cultural needs of its users in terms of safety, security, social solidarity and stability, privacy as an effective issue in traditional societies and settlements needs to be discussed and analysed. Therefore, the final part of this chapter will study the notion of privacy due to the important and dominant role it has played in the spatial organisation and morphological formation of traditional built and home environments in Arab societies and Iraq in particular.

3.1. The Concept of Tradition

The historical reading of the evolution of Arab architecture, in terms of its origin and growth, its urban morphology, its architectural models, its significant reactions and active memories makes it a distinctive phenomenon. It carries many cultural meanings and symbols and reflects the physical embodiment of Arab culture in all its evolutionary and transformational phases. In this sense, it may be necessary, according to Janet Abu-Lughod (1992), to demonstrate our acceptance of its outstanding achievements and undeniable effects, and our rejection of current techniques in translating human requirements in a unique structural form which reveals the incentives behind the renewed interest in local traditional forms and settlements that embrace social, cultural, spiritual and emotional values (Bianca, 2000, p. 184). This phenomenon describes clearly the notion of tradition. To be closer to this concept, an etymological definition of the term "*tradition*" is required to put forward a specific one that will be useful in our approach to the home environment.

The word tradition, as Ragette (2012) indicated, is derived from the Latin word "*tradire*", or passing on, or from "*traditio*" which is equivalent to the Greek "*paradosis*". It means the passing-

on of knowledge by someone or something to someone or something from generation to generation, within the family and community, by example and word of mouth, or by apprenticeship from master to disciple. It is based on age-old practical experiences, even elements of superstition, and is conserved by isolation, which is only recently arrested by the force of globalisation. Other labels used with regard to tradition are *native*, *indigenous* or *vernacular* which mean “*home-born*” or “*derived from the locality*”. These concepts refer to the principal roots of tradition but exclude the evolutionary way of doing things by absorbing external influences over a length of time (Ragette, 2012, p. 9). It is the outcome of practices and experiences of whole generations of all society's levels and members (Da Silva, Barbosa *et al.*, 2002, pp. 11-12). It is moreover the result of elaboration of many people over several generations (Rapoport, 1969, p. 6). This denotes the crucial importance of tradition as the rich heritage of continued values or the existence of things. As mentioned previously, tradition is dynamic with a transmissible ability to subsequent periods according to convertible content or process (Steele, 2005, p. 31). Tradition forms an essential source of our knowledge and serves as a source of our thoughts and behaviours (Al-Hathloul, 1981, p. 2).

Based on above-mentioned definitions, tradition can be addressed with reference to the traditional environment, which represents prolonged and huge man-made attempts, to reveal a combination of many social, cultural, behavioural and environmental aspects (Lawrence, 2001, p. 34). In human built settlements, tradition is the result of generations of worthy experiences merged together to maintain and improve an acquired level of the living environment. It defines, as well, transmitted expertise and the legacy obtained throughout the ages to reveal a form of combination between the built and spatial fabric which used local and natural resources as adequate mechanisms for achieving an ecological equilibrium between society's needs and capacity (Al Sayyed, 2011, pp. 56-57). Latter notion expresses nature in all its factors and aspects that give the built form (place); while the former illustrates, according to Norberg-Schulz (1980), socio-cultural aspects and human need that embrace society over time (Dutta, 2001, pp. 432-433). Socio-cultural factor encompasses two main issues concerning the formation of the built environment in a challenge with time. These notions articulate the main essence of tradition where the continuity and the particular way each culture can interact its environment are maintained (Rapoport, 2001b, pp. 26-32).

Traditional urban fabric depends on the physical factors of the place as the contextual platform for socio-cultural requirements and environmental elements as well as socio-psychological needs in order to provide suitable and expressive values over the course of time. In this sense, the built environment represents the outcome of the mutual relationship between place and society, or the family, over time. This process highlights, as stated by Rapoport (1989), the space-specific mechanism embodied and bounded up by place, social variables and time (Rapoport, 2001b, pp. 26-27). Therefore, the built environment can be characterised as a complex and dynamic mechanism, in response to the challenge of the environment and nature, to adapt to a range of social and cultural values that have been made over time.

3.1.1. Conceptualising Attitudes to the Traditional Built Environment

Tradition, according to Alice Horner (1990), eludes both to the procedure of passing on from era to era, and something, custom, or manner of thinking that is sat back. Until the congruity was debilitated, until the likelihood of the failure to hand things down emerged, individuals were not all that hesitant about the procedure of the giving on of tradition (Graburn, 2001, p. 6). As for the past perspective, Oleg Grabar (1987) contends that tradition can be conceptualised in two noteworthy mentalities. The first displays tradition as a body of culture that existed prior to the occurrence of any evolution. It's a statement of another time or place that cannot be realised at present. It is a sculpture or an object of a dead memory, or the past of a culture which is dead like any past (Bechhoefer, 2001, p. 51). Many scholars look at tradition as a kind of idolatry and sanctification and called for preservation of its landmarks or archaeological features as a reflection of a specific phase of history. This view fits into Graburn's concept of tradition as the cultural values that should be continued, thought about, preserved and not lost through the processing of any change (Graburn, 2001, p. 8). Walter Benjamin views history as a linear construct that principally encompasses repetitions of the past. It detects the concept of universality, in which the principles and variables that viewed history can be suitable in every locale. It presents moreover the concept of progress that includes the memories of the past which are outside the construct of history (Buck-Morss, 1989, pp. 67-68).

Tradition is essentially a critique of the notion of progress, as embedded in the view of history as the universal progression of mankind. It can be realised as a feature that still exists in the face of the advance of the process of modernisation. This attitude, as criticised by the works of many architects, indicates the notion of progress in contemporary architecture. It is often related to the use of and reliance on new technology and structural details, as an attitude towards universality (Setiawan, 2010, pp. 3-4). It recommends the maintenance and preservation of the traditional built environment in a privileged position away from the imprints of the contextual meaning. It dislocates the sense of unity in the built settlements to achieve a monumental landmark in the urban fabric of the city to indicate memory or the past. This notion has been applied in several contexts such as the expansion of the holy shrines in Kerbala, the shrine of Imam Ridha (PBUH) in Mashhad, Imam Ali (PBUH) in Najaf or other examples (Figure 3.1, 3.2). This kind of expansion reverses the traditional urban fabric in such a way that all built settlements, adjacent to the complex, were cleared to form a huge boulevard or open space around the complex isolating it from the surrounding tissue. This action conserves the traditionally built context as a monumental symbol that should be isolated from the surrounding. In such essence, it isolates traditions and customs, as codes of the organisation in traditional societies, from rationality, which strongly influencing modern societies (Al-Naim, 2006, pp. 19-21).



Figure 3.1: The ritual route in Karbala (Iraq) before and after the urban intervention show the huge structural demolition in the traditional context (Source: Hussein, 2013, p. 7)

The second attitude introduces tradition as a body of customs, beliefs and behaviours, or a flow of knowledge which exists in the memory of the population and the urban fabric of the built environment. It affects, at the same time, the intellectual perception of new developments. These elements stand respectively independent but as key factors for the progress of any development. This notion creates a new way of thinking in traditional societies in contradiction with the old one (Bechhoefer, 2001, p. 53). Tradition forms accordingly the solid base for the creation of the future which, as Marx asserted, '*cannot be created out of nothingness*' (Setiawan, 2010, pp. 5-6). This attitude looks at the traditional built environment as an active organism or a distinct cultural legacy that must be preserved, maintained and continued. It achieves its essential necessity in current and future developments (Abou Ashour and Atayah, 2010, p. 6). Alice E. Horner (1990) presents tradition as a repository of culture, which can be an important resource, can be relied upon in new developments, as is the case with the development of Haifa Street in Baghdad (Figure 3.3). It is manifested as a source of, as Horner called, "*historically defined identity*" that offering a sense of security, uniqueness and distinction (Graburn, 2001, p. 8). This attitude poses in setting up new developments without compromising traditional structures by allowing both to completely co-exist. This median solution had been adopted by the French ruler during the protectorate period in Morocco, Tunisia and Syria. Fez, Rabat, Marrakesh, Tunis, Aleppo and Damascus are distinctive examples of this approach (Bianca, 2000, p. 21).

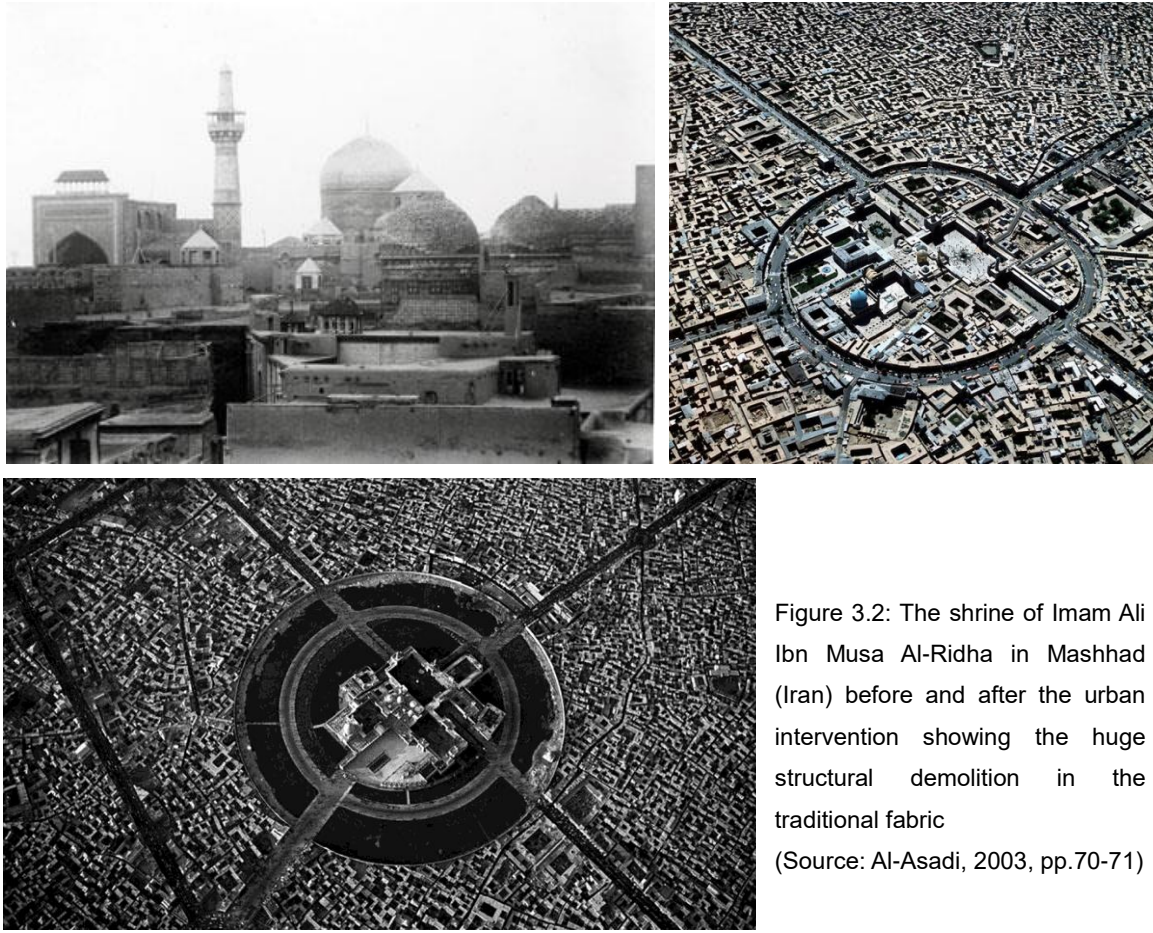


Figure 3.2: The shrine of Imam Ali Ibn Musa Al-Ridha in Mashhad (Iran) before and after the urban intervention showing the huge structural demolition in the traditional fabric
(Source: Al-Asadi, 2003, pp.70-71)

Many scholars add another attitude which adopts the trend of development and progress. It looks at the traditional environment as a part of the contemporary development, and therefore can be affected by new evolutionary influences. Accordingly, the traditional built environment can be integrated into the new social and physical context, as long as it shows a part of history that has no functional role in the light of current developments. It constitutes a stumbling block in the way of economic and social developments (Ibrahim and Hagirah, 2010, p. 13). In line with this thought, planners and rulers look towards tradition; which was handed down unchanged, un-thought out and unchallenged from generation to generation, as an obstacle to the perfection of society. Accordingly, the weight of tradition or people bounded by tradition should be thrown aside, removed or destroyed (Graburn, 2001, p. 8). This approach entails the progressive demolition of traditional complexes due to the expansion of new developments. Many traditional contexts had been demolished by imposing new developments, and dispensing with the old tissues for the purpose of implementing new structures instead, as is the case in the city of Baghdad, precisely in the last few decades, old Cairo and several parts of the Arab world (Bianca, 2000, pp. 167-168).



Figure 3.3: Haifa Street's development in Baghdad (1981-1985) shows the attempt of integration between the traditional environment and the new structure (Source: Amanat Al-Assima, 1985, p. 8)

According to Rapoport (1999), topics dealt with the traditional built environment can be classified into four approaches. The first looks at the traditional environment as something can be ignored. The second is that recognises the existence of the traditional environment but refuses its possession of any useful and meaningful lessons. The third attitude is that can be copied for the use of its shape, details, and masses and so on, embodying, therefore, the meaning of '*romantic nostalgia*'. The last attitude presents the methodological method or the notion that is more viable to traditional environments and can become points of reference for other studies as precedents rather than imitation. It is the one that can conclude more or fewer lessons and principles from it, through the use of studies, concepts, models and so on (Rapoport, 2001a, pp. 146-147). This approach strengthens the concept of integration between tradition and modernity in society. It stands in contrast to the vision of Christopher B. Wilson, (1988), in that each society cannot be at the same time characterised by or embodied both tradition and modernity (Al-Naim, 2006, p. 19). This issue identifies the main attitude of this study in deriving socio-cultural principles, that bond with the traditional environment, and employing them in current approaches to sustainability. It enhances the integrative and complementary approach to the compact built form as an important category of traditional settlements (Steele, 1996, pp. 31-32). This pattern, which is associated with or determined by the spatial and physical built form, draws certain uninterrupted paths with the previous generations in their struggle with the time and place. It insists on the latent attributes embedded in traditional environments and emerged from the mutual relationship between a man and surrounding context over time (Ahmad and Malcolm, 2001, pp. 69-70).

3.2. The Traditional Built and Home Environment

A variety of methods and techniques have dealt with the built environment. Many scholars and researchers have developed different approaches according to various philosophical perceptions for the purpose of revealing a specific one that can accommodate the tangible and intangible

aspects of the traditional context. Each analysing method is not allocated in isolation with others, but rather can coincide to the degree that it can be upheld by different attitudes (Carmona, Heath, *et al.*, 2003, p. 6; Alexander, *et al.*, 1977, p. xiii). The research will attempt to identify some of them in order to determine the one that will be adopted as an appropriate method for approaching research main objective. Specified attitude will be the result of many patterns or depends on some of them in the formulation of its specific concepts and effects. Following patterns will be tackled because of their direct impact in shaping the one that succeeded for generations to live and still demonstrates a pure source of knowledge in the field of built and urban environment. Formally speaking, the traditional built environment can be considered as an integration of multiple patterns and attitudes as they came in contact with specific socio-cultural factors, which led eventually to the building of a common form in most Arab cities. Selected methods include:

3.2.1. The Organic Attitude

The term “organic” is used to visualise the pattern of urban and built form that have been developed and adopted without prior identified or planned interferences (Morris, 1995, pp. 9-10). It represents the organic method of the traditional built form and its historical spatial and physical transformations in comparison with the natural world. It concerns societies and settlements developed using biological tools in assessing their built and spatial organisations (Alexander, 1985, p. 24). Gradual formation of city’s individual buildings and neighbourhoods articulates the concept of wholeness or perfection in organic form, just as blood vessels that distribute energy and materials to different cells and sub-systems in the organism. Spontaneous, mutual and interconnected relationships between different sub-systems perform the whole perspective of the built form (Samaniego and Moses, 2008, pp. 23-24), as a composite of integrated parts and elements. As a composite, it is the very essence of the whole that is formed of its parts. It, in turn, influences the parts, their relations and functions. If the neighbourhood, for instance as a part, is in organic relation with the city, as a whole, we may expect then that the nature of the whole will affect the pattern and nature of the part. As each element is an entity, wherein the whole is seen from a new viewpoint, its different components will indicate the nature of the whole. Accordingly, each part of the built environment represents the feeling and nature of the whole (Herbert, 1963, p. 170). Built form of most traditional Arab cities has been developed according to this relationship that provides a significant example of the organic pattern (Figure 3.4).

Socio-cultural factors and division in the social hierarchy of traditional societies reflect, to a large extent, the organic pattern (Bianca, 2000, p. 136). This complex form is created by an overlapping system of cellular residential compounds and clusters in a multiple scales (Kiet, 2010, p. 39). They display their wholeness according to the internal organisation of social conventions and traditions which provide the base of the encoded rules on what has been so-called “*organic*” (Morris, 1995, p. 9). The courtyard; as a significant part of social life, the “*agd*” (alley), “*aswaq*” (markets) and the central core; as the main social, cultural and spiritual component, have emphasised the concept of *organic* in traditional built forms. The spontaneous form of the

neighbourhood (*mahalla*), in its social, spatial and physical relatedness and connectedness with other districts, reflects the whole concept of traditional settlement. Contemporary neighbourhood unit, according to supporters of this approach, is unrealistic in practice and inorganic in theory. In considering built environment as stimulating and interesting context, socially and culturally, the contemporary neighbourhood seems entirely undesirable (Herbert, 1963, pp. 172-173). The previous one creates unity in diversity while the latter shows conformity and monotony. Traditional environment incorporates a kind of diversity related to people's relations and interactions with each other and with the surrounding tissue (Bianca, 2000, pp. 31-32). People's behaviours, relations and practices in traditional contexts, according to Madanipour (1996, p. 19), do not always follow the physical rules and principles that characterise the built tissue but are controlled by a group of intangible aspects that are the basis for the formulation of its whole form. Disregarding the role of latter values was the reason behind the ignorance of the time-scale changing mechanism in the organic pattern during transformational processes.

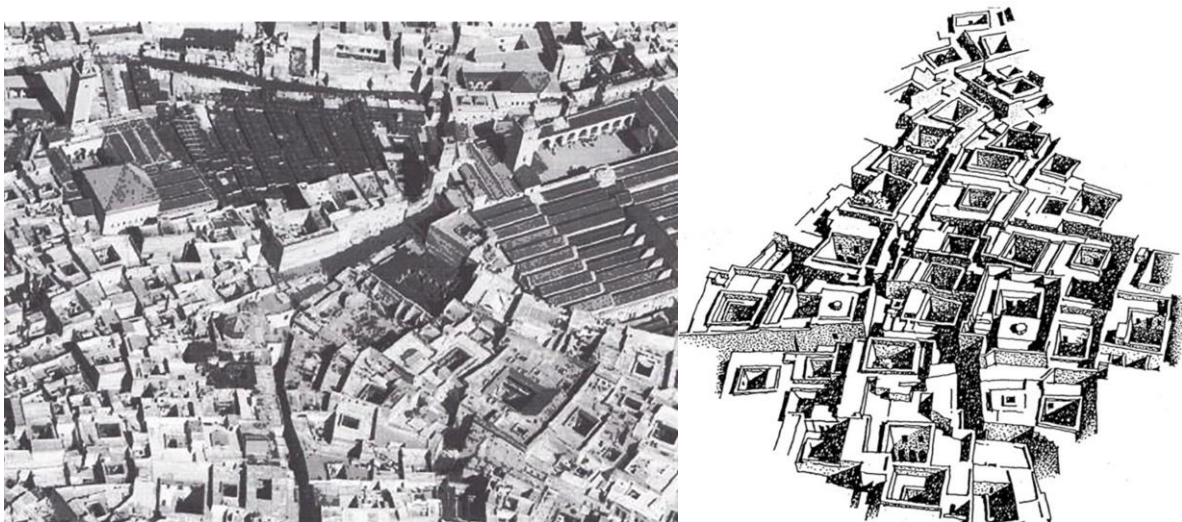


Figure 3.4: The organic urban fabric of the city of Fez and Marrakesh (Morocco)

(Source: {left} Bianca, 2000, p. 37; {right} Ragette, 2002, p. 50)

3.2.2. The Morphological Pattern

Levi-Strauss (1954) describes the built environment as an example of the most entangled human innovations, which remained at the juncture of nature and antiquity (Moudon, 1997, p. 3). It is, accurately, the study of the built environment as human living spaces or habitats. This pattern confirms the physical attributes of the built environment as specified in the shape of the built settlements (Morris, 1995, pp. 10-11). It represents the primary concern of geography in analysing the built form through studying the visible forms of the built environment (Herbert, 1982, p. 7). It illustrates the descriptive analytical study of built and urban forms. Furthermore, it concerns the historical stages of the growth and their distinct classifications in understanding the whole process that led to specific built and urban form. Michael P. Conzen (1969) has developed a certain mechanism in urban morphology to discuss the different components of the city and has

attributed them to specific historical periods and types of development. Accordingly, analysis of the city includes concepts as a process rather than pattern-oriented in understanding the integral relation between form and process (O'Sullivan, 2000, p. 85).

The morphological pattern is identified and developed as an integrated method in the analysis of the various components of the built form, and as a process in studying the historical formation of the built and urban environment and its spatial order (Ozaslan, 1998, p. 255). In other words, it can be defined as the systematic study of the formal and physical elements of the built environment. It concerns the investigation of the origins and temporal evolution of this fabric (Conzen, 1988, pp. 254-255). Gebauer and Samuels (1981, p. 12) argued that this pattern, in its widest perspective, incorporates the study of social and cultural factors in addition to the physical elements. It involves, according to their argument, focusing on the settlement of relations between social factors and physical properties. Based on this view, socio-cultural context should not be viewed as the reason behind any physical changes. However, these changes enhance the specific social mechanisms in connecting the urban fabric with the socio-cultural context in a coherent and inseparable relationship.

According to above-mentioned thoughts, morphological attitude refers to or indicates a lack of or negligence in social factors (Ozaslan, 1998, p. 58). This pattern has been criticised for its isolated perspective from the surrounding context (Hall, 1998, p. 13). It reflects the design attitude of most current developments which gives great attention to abstract morphological drawings and ideas, as they take their shape on the ground, rather than socio-cultural aspects inherent in the human. It addresses the obvious and visible results of social and economic factors (Moudon, 1997, p. 3). Accordingly, this approach cannot be taken alone as a base in our investigation of the socio-cultural aspects of the built environment.

3.2.3. Environment-Behaviour pattern / Social Attitude

This pattern illustrates socio-cultural factors as important issues in the formation of the built environment rather than the dominance of physical forms characterising the previous one. It explains many values, attitudes, preferences, beliefs and other personal characteristics that are derived not from the individual alone but coloured to a large extent of his practices and experiences as a member of the family, ethnic, cultural and social class and lifestyle collections (Porteous, 1977, p. 143). It displays interrelatedness character of culture and environment. Laurence Steinberg (1996, p. 467) argues that socio-cultural systems, constituted by inhabitants, give life to the built form which, in turn, implies and grants users an active social life. This was interpreted in an environment-behaviour relationship showing how the built environment reflects individuals' behaviours and interactions. In this vein, built form has been analysed as a result of social factors and cultural values, and is created and adopted to support a complex system of activities as influential manifestations of lifestyle and culture (Carmona, Heath, *et al.*, 2003, pp. 6-7). Amos Rapoport, (2001a, pp. 145-146), dedicates the study of the house and other forms of the built environment in the context of an explanatory theory to absorb and understand the patterns,

links and forms of interaction between environment and behaviour. In this regard, built form can only be analysed in terms of behaviours and, thus, each culture offers its own system of values. With respect to this concept, physical aspects of the traditional built environment, such as the courtyard, hierarchical sequence of spaces and compactness of the whole built form and others, can be processed and analysed through a system of activities and values including, for instance, privacy, gender segregation, safety, security, social cohesion and others through people's adaptation to their built environment. Specific human actions and behaviour may also be the result of the alteration in the built environment, especially when the environment itself is a human institution such as the house or the whole *mahalla* (Smith, 2006, p. 12). Building forms and town morphology have evolved many aspects from their natural habitats which, according to environment-behaviour theorists, have the main role in determining the built form. On the other hand, Altman (1994) argues that the environment represents a powerful determinant of human behaviours, customs and lifestyles (Boudiaf, 2010, p. 4).

As mentioned in chapter two, behaviour-environment studies have addressed three views regarding the impact of the physical fabric on people's behaviour, including environmental *determinism*, *possibilism*, and *probabilism*. Environmental *determinism* insists on the deterministic nature of the built environment on human behaviour. Physical properties of the place, according to Friedrich Ratzel (1882-1891), define human interactions and behaviours that take place within. Environmental *possibilism* argues that the built environment provides possibilities and restrictions in which people make choices based on other, mainly cultural, factors. Environmental *probabilism* suggests that the built environment provides possibilities for choice, and is not determining, but some choices are more probable than others in given physical settings. It presents the most moderate action that cites common senses. It confirms that rational and lawful relations exist between behaviour and environment (Smith, 2006, p. 136). Components of the traditional built environment are the result of a particular concept developed in connection with the social and cultural factors of the community. The creation of built form, as a manifestation of cultural values, includes, according to Rapoport (1990), the social background of the community. These values introduce influential categories affecting the socio-spatial concept of the built environment (Smith, 2006, pp. 11-13). On the other hand, meaningful aspects of traditional forms refer significantly to members within shared social groups rather than individual's desires in classical built forms (Weber, 1991, p. 67). The essence of the social pattern is inevitably linked to cultural factors and behavioural settings that affecting the built form through space, time, meaning and communication relationship (Oliver, 1989, pp. 57-58). In line with that, the concept of the traditional built form of the Arab world includes many constraints and thresholds to be followed according to specific values and inherited beliefs, rather than the restrictive plan, which forms respectively a basic system of values, norms and customs. Many scholarly studies have discussed the traditional built environment as an outcome of the societal process and socio-cultural factors. Kadri M. G. Elaraby (1996, p. 181) states that culture, as a way of life, includes many physical elements that reflected largely in a way giving its own pattern, character and

personality. Important notion regarding this approach is its focus on socio-cultural factors, as key determinants in analysing the built form.

Environment-behaviour approach is criticised for its underestimation of the role of physical properties in the formation of the built environment. Reimar Schefold, (1997, pp. 7-8), points out that physical and social factors are restricted rather than determined, and both can offer suitable solutions for the built form rather than deciding it. These variables exist in cooperation with natural constraints.

3.2.4. The Everyday Life Pattern

In his distinguish between “*everyday*” and “*any-day*” phenomena; Jack D. Douglas in (1967) first used the term ‘*everyday life phenomenon*’ which became thereafter a new approach to the built and urban environment (Adler, Adler and Fontana, 1987, p. 230). This perspective demonstrates a new way of observing the city through analysing users’ daily practices and experiences with all their spontaneity, differences and disorder. This concept introduces, according to De Certeau (1984, p. xv), methods for working which constitute the endless practices by method for which clients re-fitting the space sorted out by systems of *socio-cultural production*. For him, everyday life is the product of attempts by individuals to achieve their own lives. It is the field in which different social and cultural contradictions take place. In this context, the cultural tissue of everyday life reveals many conflicting actions and practices that constantly define and redefine its spatial organisation (Bennet, 2005, p. 3). According to this view, social interactions and cultural practices constitute the core values behind the drafting of the contextual environment. In contrast to other approaches, this attitude views the city from below in a way that makes reality visible through the entire perception of daily life (Madanipour, 1996, pp. 74-75). In ‘*Post-structuralism: A Very Short Introduction*’, (2002, p. 113), Catherine Belsey states that culture is engraved in the stories, rituals, customs, habits, elements and practices of the meanings traded at a specified time and place. This includes several levels of definition, where everyday life, with all associated rituals and practices of the individual and the group, is one of these contexts. In 1965, Raymond Williams introduced the social definition of culture, in which culture is addressed as a certain way of life including meanings and values in ordinary behaviour (Miles, 2007, P. 31). This interpretation explains how social and cultural meanings lie in individuals’ daily practices, relations and rituals. Sociologists have begun during the course of the 20th and early 21st century to define this concept as a far more disputed and dynamic sphere stressing its *pluralistic domain* rather than its early *homogenous whole* (Bennet, 2005, p. 3).

Nevertheless, this concept shows increasingly some difficulty in its definition more than other sociological issues. Although the main focus on anthropology, it shows a new source of explicit concern to sociologists (Kalekin-Fishman, 2013, p. 714). Sociology regarding this perspective consists of a wide range of micro-perspectives and factors in various fields. Its strength is located in its creation of sociological visions and issues from apparently trivial factors and properties. In the light of this concept, scholarly studies in everyday life pattern develop fundamental factors in

visualising the principles of social order, social action and social construction of reality (Adler, Adler and Fontana, 1987, p. 230). A number of early sociologists used the term “*everyday life*” in their definition of the concept of “*normal*” in various scientific and social fields (Kalekin-Fishman, 2013, p. 715). They’ve tried to analyse the social practices of everyday life with sensitivity in order to formulate a specific perspective of the social process (Madanipour, 1996, p. 75). The scope of everyday life here has been ignored as a theme, or what enormous events are meant for people participated (Kalekin-Fishman, 2013, p. 715). Jean-Jacques Rousseau (2007), in his concept of the perfect form of society, introduces the family as an integral part of everyday life and the basic form of social organisation. Talcott Parson (1949) argues, in his theory of social actions, that the quality of social organisation in everyday life is determined by individual’s decisions that constitute the basic rules and standards. Giddens (1993) asserts, on the other hand, a certain connection between the concept of human action and the structural explanation. He argues that the social environment is the high achievement of active human topics. Jurgen Habermas (1987) isolates the realm of everyday life from economic and political impacts. He insisted that these forces are inclined to break through the sphere of everyday life. After an attempt to widen the scope of reason, he argues that to enable everyday life to resist the penetration of economic and political powers, rationally organised and explicit procedures between individuals should be strengthened and promoted (Madanipour, 1996, p. 75). Marx and Engels (1975) assert that there is a “*loss of self*” because of inhuman work conditions, people faced in the context of modernity, which destroys respectively family ties with friends or among family members. Correspondingly, people find themselves with many exotic practices such as eating, sleeping or drinking which are not-fully-human actions (Kalekin-Fishman, 2013, p. 720).

Discussions of everyday life show the significance of the concept of ‘*practice*’ whose term, academically speaking, is used in two different ways. The first concerns things people do with no attention to its theoretical implications. Application of practices within this concept is not analytical and should not be viewed as such. The second defines it as sets of associated human activities which form a fundamental factor in the social analytical concept (Pink, 2012, p. 16). In his comprehension of daily practices, De Certeau accentuates on the activities of individuals as ‘*consumers*’ exploring despite the arrangement of forces. Pierre Bourdieu, on the other hand, focuses on embedded activities in what he called the ‘*habitus*’. Both contentions conceptualise practices as types of *resistant*, with regard to De Certeau’s, or *normative* referring to Bourdieu’s viewpoint (Pink, 2012, pp. 17-19). Philosopher Theodore R. Schatzki (2001) looks at practices as essential actions in realising society and everyday life for its actors. According to his perspective, practice field comprises of many components; such as knowledge, activity, meaning, language, science, social interaction and historical and temporal transformation that can situate the practice at the core of the social analysis. Accordingly, practices are represented as a source of meaning rather than individuals (Pink, 2012, p. 20). In this use, everyday life and its complexity can be approached through practices. Nevertheless, both practices and individuals should be understood as part of broader formations which in turn reveal the performance or the structure of the practice (Pink, 2012, p. 22). Practices are dynamic in time, as people and things, and are part of the

dynamicity or the flow of everyday life (Pink, 2012, p. 42). This concept detects the importance of time, as we live it and are in it, in promoting the movement of everyday life. To approach everyday life, redundancy or social production of activity in space and time are closely integrated with each other to the point that we cannot discuss time away from spatial settings. This intertwined relation can be detected through the participation of individuals in social activity (Giddens, 1979, p. 205).

For approaching a successful analytical study of the everyday life, three primary prerequisites should be mulled over. The first one is that the researcher must be a part of everyday life, and takes the role of the participant, not just an observer. The second is researcher's coexistence and absorption of the daily experience with all its related customs, sentiments and feelings. The final is to assess the validity of political and economic systems, which are beyond the scope of this study, in dissecting and clarifying social life (Madanipour, 1996, p. 74). Henri Lefebvre argues that the whole built environment should be the focus or the context in which the entire notion of everyday life can be fully acknowledged, comprehended and experienced (Figure 3.5). It is evident that urban life determines peoples' daily interactions with spaces. Its constant challenges are displayed by the diversity of place, of social groups and of functions, yet not of everyday life (Kalekin-Fishman, 2013, p. 720).



Figure 3.5: Everyday life and practice in traditional public and semi-public contexts in Iraq
(Source: Noor, 1979, p.185)

This attitude has been criticised for its inability to distinguish between physical properties and overarching social processes that affect the diversity of urban living patterns and meanings (Madanipour, 1996, pp. 20-23).

3.2.5. The Socio-Spatial Pattern

With respect to previous attitudes, many shared notions can be distinguished in accordance with the formative process of the built environment and the concept of relatedness between socio-cultural factors and physical elements. The built environment is the production of a complex mechanism and the outcome of the influence of different variables to give its final shape (Hall, 1969, p. 145). Relatedness between socio-cultural variables has a critical part in understanding the mechanism and process controlling the entire built environment. This notion accentuates the

fact that *'the whole is more than its parts'*. Understanding built form incorporates both physical features and socio-cultural variables to identify the various determinants influencing the formation of the built form (Madanipour, 1996, p. 20). Mark Gottdiener (1994), in his attempts to a socio-spatial approach to the built environment, analyses and investigates the economic settings of space with a full ignorance of the role of spatial organisation and relations in providing its form (Madanipour, 1996, p. 75). Rapoport (1990) presents the notion of time as a significant factor in the analytical approach of the built environment, and evaluation of the whole urban form.

In the light of these notions, Madanipour (1996) presents the concept of the socio-spatial approach to the built form which sees as a combination of several concepts and lines. This can be displayed as an outcome of a comprehensive method comprising both social and physical patterns of the built form with all their variables. Physical factor, according to this approach, reveals tangible components in their natural context, while social variables include users' socio-cultural values and their evaluation of the whole urban fabric. He argues that the relationship between these interrelated aspects is dynamic over time. Their spatial arrangements and interrelationships decide the overall notion and meaning of the built form in a flexible method over time (Madanipour, 1996, p. 73). This pattern is the outcome of two significant attitudes focusing on natural / man-made elements, and social determinants and variables. The main problem with this approach is its great emphasis on contemporary settlements rather than widening its perspective to include traditional ones. Therefore, it is necessary to take this approach in combination with others in order to cover the different factors of the built environment.

3.2.6. The Main Pattern of the Research

The research will rely on many lines in drawing its analytical method. It will first take the advantages of organic and morphological patterns of selected cases with a particular reliance on social and cultural factors of Iraqi society. It will moreover depend on Rapoport's ideas in introducing social and cultural factors embedded in different parts of the traditional built and home environment. In this sense and due to the main aim of the study, its main focus will be to identify and shed light on the concept of socio-spatial pattern. More accurately, these lines and patterns will be analysed within the scope of everyday life and socio-spatial method in order to achieve the main aim of the study. Historical overview of the evolution of the house will be important in introducing and discussing the levels of changes and developments in the home environment.

In the search for the socio-cultural values of the traditional built environment in Iraq, the first two lines will be discussed to figure out the initial meaning of space, and the main factors affecting the spatial organisation of the built form. Special emphasis will be placed on the traditional house as a rich physical content or embodiment of human social, cultural, emotional and intellectual resources which in turn conduct a physical, identifiable and meaningful environment (Cetin, 2010, p. 31). Social and cultural values will be analysed as key issues in approaching the selected form that is sustainable socially and culturally.

3.3. Shaping Elements of the Traditional Home Environment

The subject of the home environment seems to determine in addition to the establishment and formation of the spatial and physical organisation for a particular context, but even shows latent socio-cultural aspects embedded in its morphological pattern. It evokes individual's private attributes in public realms through its embodiment of human actions, beliefs, personality and behaviour in a rationally constructive method (Sternberg, 2000, p. 265). It shows a great part of integrated socio-cultural factors, rituals and everyday relations and practices which create, in an organised manner, a sense of both vitality and humanity at the scale of the home and *mahalla*. It is a combination of polarity and gradation, which identified by Johann Wolfgang van Goethe in his perceptive morphological studies, through their reciprocal interactions with each other and with the surrounding tissue, and thus gives life, unity and quality of the environment and its users (Bianca, 2000, pp. 167-168). Hierarchical sequence mechanism of the built environment happens at all levels, from the singular room of the residential unit to the entire fabric of the city, resulting in a mixed but perfectly homogeneous pattern. It embodies the ideal tool for the neutralisation of the contrasting qualities of several concepts, such as open/closed spaces, public/private realms and male/female social aspects and many others. These values achieve the concept of “*wholeness*” where every part reflects the whole socially, culturally and physically (Kiet, 2010, p. 39; Hakim, 1982, p. 82). Stefano Bianca (2000, p. 142) states that traditional environment stresses that the solid and powerful social system exercised in conjunction with evenly powerful customary laws, the apparent absence of official civic institution and the subsequent stabilisation of self-reliance communities and social groups led to a certain kind of space organisation.

Various factors of the built environment can be clearly understood by recognising their role in shaping the spatial arrangement of both the whole fabric and small residential units. This context was established according to interrelated factors which have had a prime role in giving its distinct form. While these forms appear in a variety of origins and patterns, but they were organised according to a common set of social, cultural, environmental, geographical and religious factors to approach a similar morphological form (Ben-Hamouche, 2009; Bianca, 2000; Lapidus, 1969; Saqqaf, 1987; Abu-Lughod, 1987). Based on these ideas, many scholarly studies have identified a series of factors that have been instrumental in the formation of the idea of the traditional home environment. These factors can be summarised in the following categories:

3.3.1. The Social Construction

In the social interpretation of Arab built environments, Ira M. Lapidus (1969) divided traditional societies into a system of subsidiary social groups which have the obligation to decide and keep up any physical changes in the home environment. For Lapidus, such solidarities are marginal to the rest of society and fall short in providing a basis for the integration of the population as a whole in a solitary group or single community (Lapidus, 1969, pp. 184-185). The outcome of social interactions between different social groups creates a specific form of the built environment (Alsayyad, 1996, p. 93). The solidarity of social groups in residential quarters (*mahallas*) has

emerged from the social relations of families with each other, ethnic origins and cultural perspective. In this sense, the built environment can be directed towards meeting these socio-cultural requirements in terms of kinship, solidarity, security and safety, social order, rituals and religious practices (Saoud, 2002, p. 32). These factors encouraged many social groups to gather in a certain region, thus leading to the construction of a small community within the social structure of the whole settlement. Social cohesion between social groups perpetuates the concept of the small community in the absence of central control or manageable system, which thereby creates socially homogeneous quarters (Lapidus, 1969, p. 185).

Embodying the social and cultural factors, according to Jamel A. Akbar (1988), creates a homogeneous form of self-reliance entities in the traditional neighbourhood (*mahalla*). He argues that different organisational decisions concerning this residential clustering are taken from those who are in direct correlation. These decisions include or embody a solid form of mutual social and cultural relations between the neighbours within the same cluster or adjacent residential districts (Alizadeh, 2005, pp. 31-32). The social construction of the built environment, according to Bianca (2000, p. 9), is a cultural product of a set of ritualised patterns of human behaviour and practices at the individual level as well as on the collective level of society. This concept embraces all aspects of daily life and social interactions and permeates human actions with constant reference to recognised religious truth. Akbar in (1988) insisted that the main factor in determining traditional built environments in Arab societies is shared conventions derived from the unity between neighbourhoods. This unit is the result of homogeneity among all layers of society in accordance with Islamic laws and tribal affiliation. Along with this attitude, Akbar has attempted to bridge the gap between social factors, 'Urf', launched by Hakim, and morphological organisation of the built environment on the basis of Islamic rules and principles (Alsayyad, 1996, p. 93). The problem with Akbar and scholars, supported this attitude, is that they have attributed social interpretations to Islamic laws, beliefs and principles while this type can be simply recognised in non-Islamic societies or even within different ethnic groups (Al-Hathloul, 2011, p. 28).

3.3.1.1. Structuralism and Structuration

Previous social analysis develops further studies particularly that of structuralism whose major proponent is Claude Levi-Strauss. Levi-Strauss (1963, cited in Lawrence and Low, 1990, p. 468) assumes the existence of (a) '*a structural collective unconscious*' fit for creating of designed *cultural behaviour, including built forms, and (b) 'unconscious mental structures'* contained twofold resistances that speak to all inclusive qualities of human thought. He argues that things are not always what they seem in an attempt to solve the mysteries and contradictions emerged from the comparison between different socio-symbolic settlements of the same society. Application of this approach in spatial relations is made by Christine Hugh-Jones (1979) in the detection of the integration of the entire system in Pira Parana life through a series of symbolic transformations for many structural meanings derived from the daily life and rituals. In her many structural analyses, she found out that the built form is the activation of religious rituals and daily practices (Lawrence

and Low, 1990, pp. 468-469). The main problem in structuralism in general and Levi-Strauss, in particular, is the lack of clarity in interpreting and clarifying the logic of connections and operations between its various parts.

Pierre Bourdieu's works in formalising the role of actions and viable applications represent an important advance beyond the approach to structuralism in *the production and reproduction of meanings and structures in socio-spatial order* (Bourdieu, 1977, pp. 105-106). Inconsistency in locating the rules in the unconscious and reliance on static synchronic analysis and its structural tools are the key values that have been rejected by Bourdieu in structuralism. Bourdieu's theory is based on practising the concept of *habitus* as generative principles of both collective systems and social practices to reproduce existing structures. His concept represents a '*system of dispositions*' including the way of life as a result of organised actions to demonstrate human existence. In the generation of practices, habitus plays an important role in reproducing the conditions that initially make it happen, and thus as '*product and producer of history*' (Lawrence and Low, 1990, p. 469). Limiting the action of others rather than assimilating mental structures is the position of each individual in the house according to Bourdieu's concept of *habitus*. His structuralist analysis of the Kabyle house (Figure 3.6), for example, detects a number of homologous and heterogeneous structures of physical and symbolic oppositions which introduce the factors and system that Bourdieu depends on to trace out and check how practices and actions, with respect to spatial formations and objects, can socialise. Home, in the case of the Kabyle, is a metaphor for universe organisation and is built on the basis of gender's principles. Here, practice is revealed as the setting where *body space* and *cosmos space* are featured together. Bourdieu's understanding of people's interactions with the built environment is mainly based on the spatial dimension of the action, where space and time play an active role in this type of communication, rather than traditional synchronic structuralist approaches which look at the spatial arrangement of the built environment as "*locale*" (Bourdieu, 1977, p. 110).

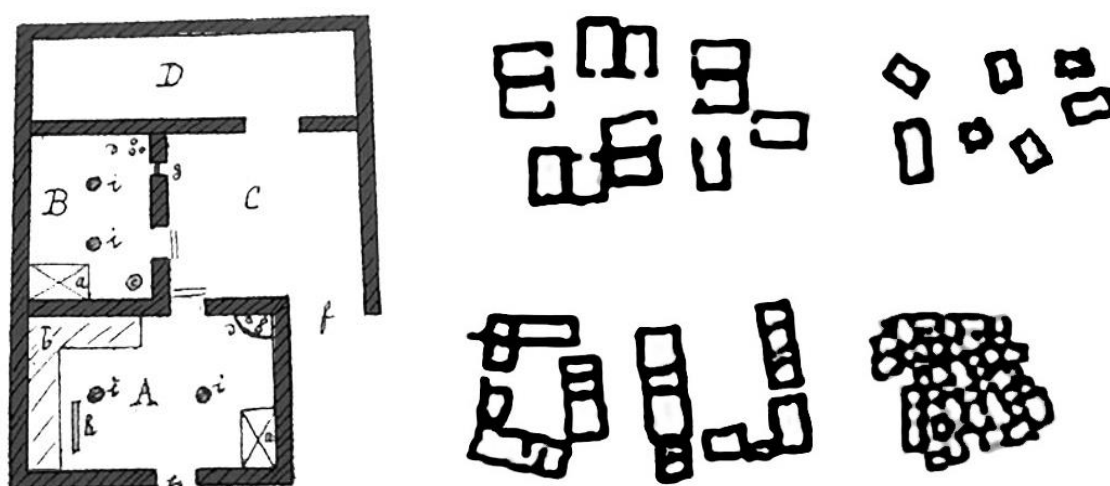


Figure 3.6: The Kabyle house (Zeynep, 1997, p. 94)

Drawing on Bourdieu's approach and Geertz & Ricoeur's interpretive approach to understand the built environment, Henrietta L. Moore (1986), in her anthropological study of the Kenya's

Marakwet spatial text, shows how spatial meanings and gender's ideologies are the bases for determining the *physical activities in and movement through space*. Roderick Lawrence draws on Bourdieu's concept of his comparative historical development of house form and the spatial organisation of domestic activities. He shows how a basic structure of functional attributes and symbolic meanings, characterised in the bilateral contradictions (clean/dirty, day/night, private/public), can affect and explain the organisation of domestic spaces (Lawrence and Low, 1990, p. 470). Giddens in (1984) presented his theory of structuration revealing the importance of the merge or incorporation of space into social theory as correlated to the occurrence and existence of social behaviour. Accordingly, any social interaction will happen in space and time as well. The importance of spatial factors in social analysis is viewed through the concept of the *locale*. The significance of this theory is the successful link of human agency that interfaces *social action at the level of the individual (microanalysis)* with that of the *social structure (macroanalysis)*. In respect to the previous meaning, social structural change is based on social practices. The process of reproduction of social activities, as Giddens argued, depends on the performance of daily practices and behaviour. Social practices are realised through the concept of socialisation during the passage of time. Reproduction of social values and socialisation become a major factor in the formulation of the individual and the community as a whole. This mechanism is expressed mainly in the daily life and social practices (Lawrence and Low, 1990, p. 489).

Numbers of studies have drawn on Giddens's structuration theory and Bourdieu's concept of habitus to decide mutual correlations between social structure and human actions and behaviour. They clarify the reproduction of social relations in daily life and practices. Search in the social and cultural factors of the built environment demonstrates many directions for further findings and explorations. Many approaches indicate the direct impact and expression of social and political categories in the built environment. The main focus is on the changing meaning, values and identity of the built environment in relation to social and political factors.

3.3.1.2 Rituals in Everyday life

Several studies in the concept of the use of rituals emphasise efficiency and effectiveness of the ritual in shaping the built environment, and how the latter obtains, in contrast, its specific meaning through effective performance of certain rituals. Emile Durkheim and Marcel Mauss in (1969) emphasised on community social structure by renewing and confirming social bonds among its members through repetition and reproduction of standard practices and collective symbolic meanings. Organisation and dimension of space can be confirmed through its association and connection with many symbols in the case of rituals. Rather than just the expression of built environments, however, ritual's perspective of their meaning is *performative*, interactive and dynamic. Many studies in rituals discuss how *performative* values of rituals can give social and symbolic significance to elements of the built environment. Some of them obtain complicated meanings (Lawrence and Low, 1990, p. 474). In this case, built environment may act or serve as a '*key ritual symbol*' providing a particular expression or appearance. Social practices and

surrounding spatial and physical settings, according to Werner, *et al.* (1993, pp. 109-110), are integral and inseparable parts of the relationship processes. Accordingly, tangible settings are used by people as communicative tools or symbols while social practice. Users, on the other hand, are involved in many mutual relations that support their part in other relational processes.

Social festivities, traditions, daily routines and religious events, according to Steven J. Wolin and Linda Bennet (1984), are significant examples of family rituals and are influential activity patterns in traditional societies. Each of them offers a kind of social, cultural or individual identity according to the dialectical position with the surrounding environment. They comprise repetitive actions and constant events occurring in the community over time. They are considered exhaustive entities, where a group of characters and standards involved completing their performance, including community members, physical and spatial aspects of the built environment, psychological and behavioural values of individuals, socio-cultural factors and time settings. In this relationship, social and physical contexts define or are identified by the individual, through his active interaction with broader social units, and the effective contribution of community members in the event. Participants and spatial/physical components form correspondingly an integrated social unit where each part gives meaning and is defined by its relation with *broader collectives*. Temporal settings are integrated to this phenomenon. Time here, as indicated by Lefebvre (1991, p. 95), is secured inside space. Therefore, time and physical context, objects involved, people participated are all impressive factors in the event performance. Many relations can be revealed in the individual-society interplay, *such as individual/collective identity, physical accessibility/inaccessibility, psychological openness/closedness, connection/autonomy*, and so on (Werner, *et al.*, 1993, pp. 111-114).

Particular relations can be activated and achieved during the performance of rituals, where some of them continue or end longer after the completion of the performance itself. Many performances, as Hugh-Jones argued in (1979), are revealed as essential mechanisms to operationalize the concept of the built environment t, or, according to E. Pavlides and J. E. Hesser (1989), are presented as important factors in the investment and transformation of spaces, with their specific meanings. Others tackle the importance of ritual in the creation or re-creation of the boundaries of the community (Lawrence and Low, 1990, pp. 474-475). Analysis of the importance of ritual in the urban environment shows how specific mechanisms create or activate concrete connections between meanings and built forms. Consequently, many built forms and spatial arrangements do not take their rightful place, or play their proper role in the social and cultural life, as evidenced by their users, without ritual acts.

3.3.2. The Socio-Spatial Construction

From the socio-spatial background, A.E.J. Morris (1994, p. 10) sorts the main determinants of traditional built environments into two significant sets of properties including original and later determinants. The former includes natural and man-made factors while the latter comprises the laws and guidelines that define the process of drafting the built environment. Lapidus (1969)

classifies these determinants into organic and planned determinants. Morris's concept is noted in the work of many scholars such as Besim S. Hakim (1986). Various factors of traditional built forms, according to Hakim, have emerged with particular Islamic qualities. Hakim refers later determinants to Islamic law and the essence of Islam in the form of '*Urf*', or as habits, customs and conventions (Hakim, 1986, p. 12). In line with the view of Morris, Bianca (2000, p. 136) relates traditional patterns to Islamic highly-ritualised living attitudes and characters absorbing pre-Islamic built environments. He lists these determinants into external and internal factors which imply in the individual architectural components or the configuration of the urban fabric. Internal factors are viewed and embodied in the human being as non-physical factors that emphasise the social and cultural action of the individual and society. This social/cultural combination is compressed in an integrated whole component that symbolises or embodies the key factors for the organic form (Elaraby, 1996, p. 138).

Diversity in traditional built environments is considered as the main aspect of socio-spatial explanation. Hakim (1994) argues that diversity is achieved not only through the initial concept for the formation in urban areas but through the recognition of local rules and conventions or '*Urf*' in its linguistic and practical forms (Bianca, 2000, p. 146; Hakim, 1986, p. 12). These rules reflect many socio-cultural factors and principles. Home in traditional environments manifests this social, cultural and spatial diversity where each space can be repeatedly used for the performance of different activities according to the social and cultural interaction intended to take place.

3.3.3. Religious and Cultural Beliefs

In addition to previous factors, natural laws, political motivations and religious and cultural beliefs, according to many scholarly studies, form the core of the social life of Arab societies (Saoud, 2002, p. 36). Religious and cultural beliefs are mainly initiated by the work of many scholars such as Hakim (1988), Lapidus (1969), Akbar (1988) and others. Many parts of previous factors have discussed revealing many aspects of their role in drafting the traditional built environment.

Abu-Lughod (1987) professes many ways to the contributions of religion. The first is that religion makes a clear distinction among people's different social classes on the basis of their relation to the community (*Umma*). These distinctions are available in references of territoriality, and could be, under certain conditions, interpreted in the spatial segregation. The second is that Islam creates a set of architectural and spatial requirements that contain a range of solutions for many socio-cultural problems, such as separation of the sexes, solidarity and stability. Social segregation, for example, has been achieved through the division of functions and places on the basis of sex, which led to the creation of a kind of visual isolation between them. The last solution refers to a system of property laws, which govern the rights and obligations vis a' vis both the property owners and the state. Such customary laws have achieved a sort of continuous reproduction of specific patterns of space. For the primary role is the pre-existing rights of the individual and the small social group or collective users of land, and secondary is the rights and responsibilities of proximate neighbours, followed by those of more distant ones, and finally is the

right of collectively or larger administrative units. Under such circumstances, accesses to entrances take priority over specific thoroughfares (Abu-Lughod, 1987, p. 161; Hakim, 1986 & 1994). Islamic property laws, about preferential responsibility to neighbours and control over accessible ways to housing units, may be partly responsible for the typical cellular pattern found in residential neighbourhoods. This pattern reflects the most prominent features of the city, through its splitting into smaller quarters whose approximate boundaries remain relatively constant over time (Abu-Lughod, 1987, pp. 162-163; Lynch, 1960, p. 90). Based on the viewpoint of these scholars, Islam, as religion, doesn't determine the overall morphology of the city, but its values, factors and principles can be interpreted as specific architectural and spatial order. Therefore, Islam constitutes an integral socio-cultural system and provides an adaptive mechanism for helping society in achieving its aims, rather than determining them (Ben-Hamouche, 2009, pp. 23-25). The key feature here is that the implications of the Islamic system have produced relevant social structures, sober social beliefs, concrete cultural aspects and coherent living habits. These values, standards and components are being employed in specific spatial references, certain urban layouts and artistic concepts that express the physical and spatial arrangement of the traditional built environment (Kiet, 2010, p. 37).

The idea of this model has been criticised by many studies that have insisted on the fact that some traditional settlements are an extension of those pre-existing. Moreover, some of their morphological features are inherited or emerged through the process of convergence with existing contexts (Lapidus, 1973, p. 185). Considering this point, Bianca (2000, p. 136) believes that surviving physical structures of late Roman-Hellenistic cities in Syria, such as Damascus and Aleppo, became the setting for a cultural encounter between Arab immigrants and local sedentary population. These built environments include not only Muslims but different social and ethnic groups as mentioned previously (Hakim, 1986, p. 12). Based on this point of view, Islam is not the only reason behind shaping the morphology of the traditional built and urban form. The source of the formation of these environments often depends on a combination of a variety of factors (Raouf, 1985, p. 369). Ben Saleh (1998, p. 538) asserts that built and urban patterns and architectural characters in such communities are developed to cope with two different factors; *immutable* and *mutable* factors. Latter factors are imposed by '*urf*' and environmental forces, including political, climatic, geographic, geological, technological and economic factors. Former factors imposed by the '*Shari'ah*', and confined to Islamic religious requirements, as interpreted by Muslim scholars and jurists. Islamic way of life has emerged as a result of a correlation between *immutable* and *mutable* factors, where any change in one or more issues means a disorder in other standards. Integration of these factors into traditional Islamic societies has produced architecture with a sense of continuity, but not one of any particular styles. Accordingly, social, cultural, political and economic values of new forms are influenced by the previous local topography and morphological factors.

3.4. Morphological Description of the Traditional Built Form

An analytical description of how this integral form is worked and what aspects can be drawn from this type will be helpful in our approach to sustainability. However, there is a general consensus among scholars that traditional built form in the Arab world shares mostly similar features (Saoud, 2002, p. 18).

The multifunctional structural component that partially surrounds the central courtyard of the Friday mosque or the shrine in religious cities, as is the case in Kadhimiya and Najaf (Figure 3.7), includes a variety of layers of integrated social, cultural and economic networks manifested by the traditional *aziqqa* (alleys), shops and *aswaq* (markets) (Saoud, 2002, p. 56; Bianca, 2000, p. 148). As long as this core is enmeshed in a system of markets (*aswaq*) and alleys, it is often accessible from different sides through many entry gates or thresholds. This structure is interconnected with a complex of commercial facilities in the form of caravanserais, civic, educational, religious and social centres. In this context, primary movement system of the markets (*aswaq*) becomes the primary access to the central public space and internal structures. Many specialised public spaces with specific socio-cultural aims are often located off the main alleys (Ben-Hamouche, 2009, p. 23; Nour, 1979, p. 254). A number of other roads connect the central core and facilities associated with the rest of the city. Main alleys, which are often lined with shops, represent users' pathways or passages throughout residential districts, or *mahallas*, and the main public arena. They serve moreover as protective shields hiding residential districts and keeping them spared and free from any kind of unwanted or alien intrusion. At the intersection of the main roads or along them, narrow winding alleys are shaped and created, and are often indicated or marked by small gates, thresholds, or distinct openings in the wall surrounding the *mahalla* and defining the market (*suq*). They represent main entries to intertwined residential districts (*mahallas*) behind. These alleys work as filtering nests for the flow of people, and transitional realms between the public and the utmost private, managing and ordering gradually the human and intimate sphere of the built fabric manifested in a traditional house (Kiet, 2010, p. 38; Nour, 1979, pp. 255-258). The transitional process includes a series of spaces varying in their physical settings, spatial determinants and social values.



Figure 3.7: Najaf (Iraq) before and after the intervention showing the courtyard walls as adhesive to residential buildings (Source: Hussein, 2013, p. 6)

Rest of the built fabric is occupied by residential districts (*mahallas*) which largely start from the main thoroughfare, as the dominant stream of the public domain, to the city wall or the periphery. Residential quarters are situated according to a specific morphological system with reference to the spatial settings of nearby built communities (Kiet, 2010, p. 39). Residential properties of the *mahalla* depend on an integrated and coherent system of relations and interactions interpreted and embodied by the 'wall to wall' pattern of the courtyard house. Houses in such contexts are largely introverted structural units for achieving some kind of protection from aliens or blocking any visual intrusion from the street or nearby houses. Moreover, narrow alleys are dramatically curvy, winding and broken into several sections to increase the degree of privacy towards the ultimate private domain of the house. Intermediate sections of the street network gradually absorb the spontaneous flow of pedestrians (Figure 3.8). A cluster of houses, belong sometimes to families of the same kinship, leads the street sequentially toward more private corridor in the pattern of a dead-end or cul-de-sac. Many physical methods are used to achieve protection and increase privacy, such as dead-end alleys and gradual sequence of gates and thresholds, which, at last, block any kind of friction with the public domain (Bianca, 2000; kiet, 2010; Ben-Hamouche, 2009; Saoud, 2003).

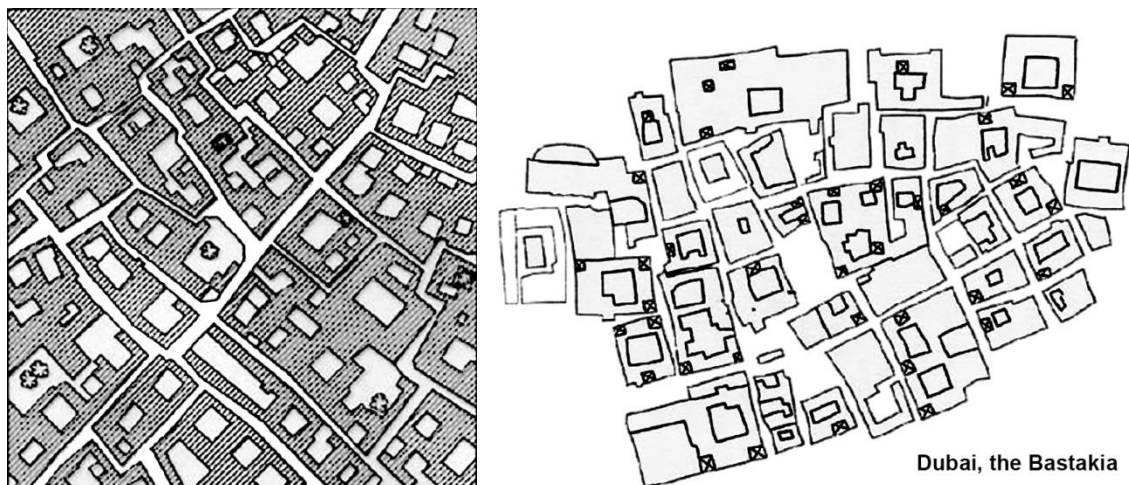


Figure 3.8: Traditional Structural forms in the Old Cities of Kuwait and Dubai; Left: The city of Kuwait, Right: The old city of Bastakia (Dubai) (Source: Saoud, 2003, p. 43)

Establishment of new houses in the neighbourhood (*mahalla*) is a complicated process and needs a special mechanism, where many socio-cultural factors or determinants should be taken into account before driving any structural progress. Complex design decisions may be required in such process. The most important topic, which affecting any structural decision, is the vital need to achieve and maintain privacy. Openings of any opposite properties confronting the same alley, for example, cannot be located facing each other for avoiding any direct visual contact between inhabitants (Bianca, 2000, pp. 167-168). Furthermore, Structural elements protruding along the alleys are the result of many decisions of the same family, in the case of expansion space, or as a regulatory mechanism for the spaces of the house. Application of this concept leads to many encroachments, as cantilevered elements, into the public sphere of the alley. Openings and

windows in these structural elements must be covered by lattice structures in order to enhance privacy or secure visual connections. Structural encroachments, called *shanashil* (Figure 3.9), reflect primarily the social context in achieving a kind of secure social interaction between neighbouring and opposite units, or between the unit itself and public spaces. They achieve a structured visual communication, socially and morally, as long as women are their main occupiers or users (Warren and Fethi, 1982, pp. 100-101).

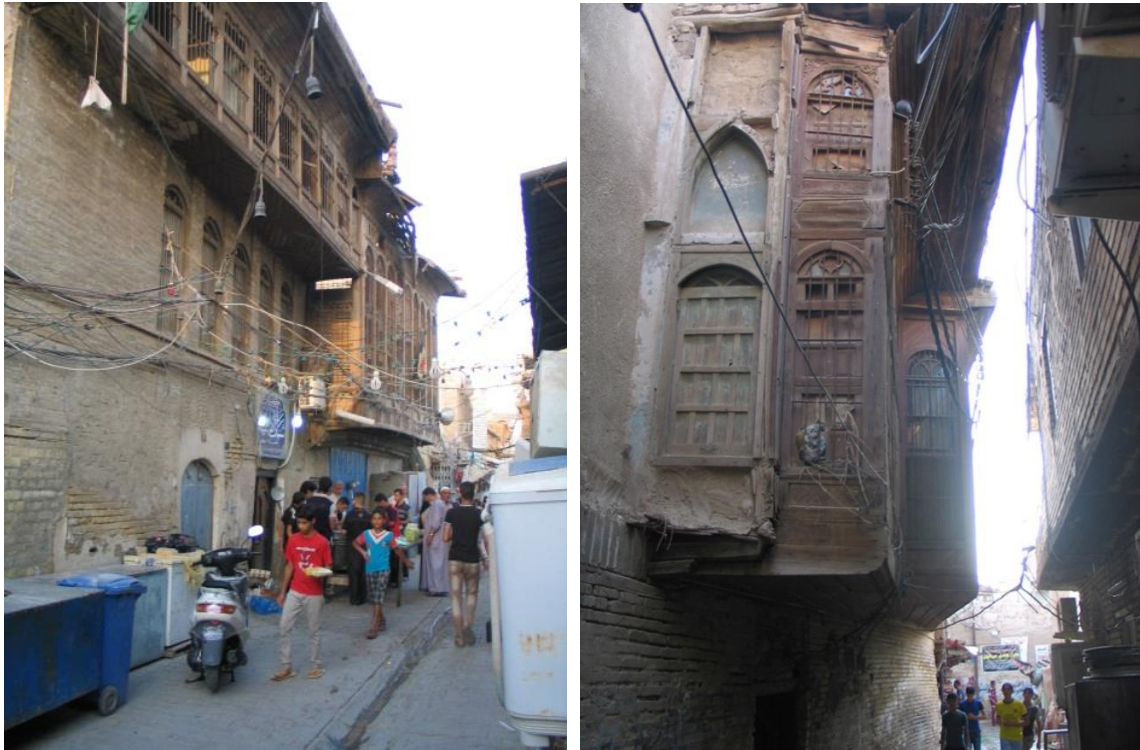


Figure 3.9: Upper-level cantilevered windows (*shanashils*) in traditional houses and *mahalla*

3.5. Inductive Thoughts to the Home Environment

The combination of previously mentioned thoughts, attitudes and determinants participate in determining and shaping the traditional built form. Islamic rules, factors and principles are not the only determinants of the formation of traditional settlements, as being introduced by several scholarly studies. In the case of Baghdad (762 AD), which, according to Bianca (2000, p. 137), was strongly influenced by 'Persian' cosmological concepts (Figure 3.10), and Cairo (969 AD), geopolitical factors played significant roles in their emergence, whereas the development of Kerbala, Najaf and many others based on religious values, beliefs and principles. The traditional urban fabric is composed of different communities and from various cultural backgrounds, but sharing similar principles. This type of organisation can also be noticed in other societies rather than Islamic ones. Jewish quarters of Muslim urban communities, for instance, according to Bianca (2000, p.141), are no special case to this as they mirror the intentional self-rule allowed to discrete ethnic and tribal gatherings inside a pluralistic and multi-central urban development pattern, as opposed to the modern 'ghetto' idea. In this sense, Robin Burgess (2000, p. 14) argues that the community must be understood in its relationship with three key aspects of life

including ecological, cultural and political, which determine the form and nature of society. At the same time, each geographical context has its natural and socio-cultural circumstances that require a definite position.

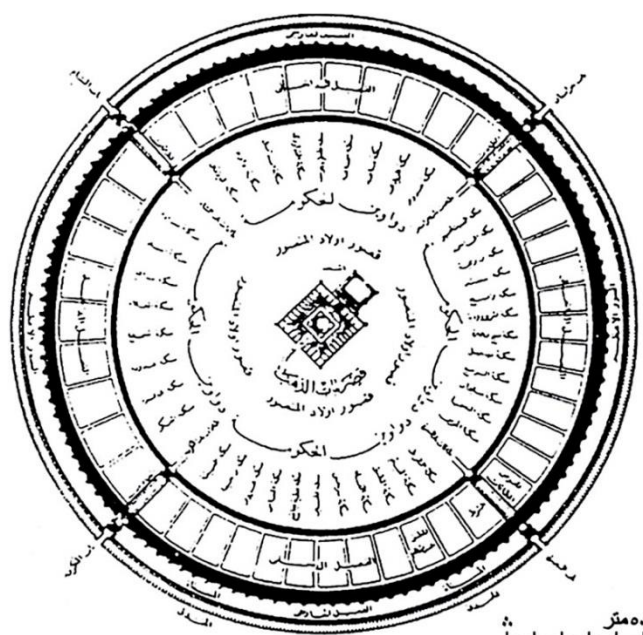


Figure 3.10: The circular plan of the city of Baghdad (762 AD) (Source: Bianca, 2000, p. 137)

The main approach will depend on social principles and cultural beliefs as reference points for analysis, especially in the comparative investigation of the cases selected. Islamic principles and beliefs will be distinguished as a way of life and essential rules in everyday rituals and practices (Elaraby, 1996, p. 138). Next part will relate to the concept of privacy as a core Islamic value with respect to the separation of the sexes. This concept reveals the social principle and cultural belief, which played a key role in shaping the whole concept of traditional fabric in reference to its spatial organisation. It will be considered as the guiding principle in the analysis of case studies.

3.6. The Notion of Privacy

Issues of security and privacy for residents and their property have largely a decisive impact on the built form and home environment during the development of traditional settlements. Respect of visual privacy among residents, in both indoor and outdoor living spaces, is of utmost concern (Eben Saleh, 1997, pp. 167-168). Traditional Arab communities have achieved harmonious integration between private spaces and public realms. Street networks have become increasingly excited spheres, producing visual and intellectual diversities and achieving active daily socio-cultural practices (Bianca, 2000, pp. 167-168).

Privacy occupies a large preference and priority in the formation of traditional contexts in Iraq and other Arab societies. The architecture of home and organisation of social spaces depend largely on the concept of privacy and gender segregation (Al-Thahab, A. *et. al.*, 2014, p. 238). It is

reflected as a major factor in the organisation of public and private spheres in all areas throughout the city, and arrangement of social spaces within the individual house (Madanipour, 1998, p. 243; Abu-Lughod, 1983, p. 67). The predominant importance of privacy is revealed with reference to the concept of social segregation between male and female within the social structure of the built environment (Mazumdar and Mazumdar, 2001, pp. 303-304). In most cases dealing with privacy ends in the separation of social spaces with different physical, behavioural and spatial boundaries. This approach will provide an accurate picture of the meaning of the social sphere as important as in the description of the concept of social space with respect to privacy. This study will show how dynamic concept of public/private spaces is, through its practical application and non-verbal manifestation for many social concepts, particularly privacy, in the arrangement of spaces in the traditional house.

3.6.1. The Definition of Privacy

Primarily, privacy can be defined as the vital mechanism for developing and maintaining the special arrangement of traditional living environments, through the achievement of the notion of the '*development from inside-out*' (Rapoport, 1977, p. 58). It has been understood as refusing access by other persons in specific situations and as private rights against holders of authority or other members of the same society (Adam, 1990, pp. 1-2). This strengthens private sphere priority, as it captures most of the social aspects of the family, over outer space (Monteguín, 1983, p. 48). The overriding importance of the private realm can be noticed in the concept or meaning of the family in Islamic culture, as the base of entire socio-cultural organisation and the core of social and economic activities. Its conceptualisation in the Arabic language includes "*'aila* or *usra*", which reflects mutual commitments and relationships of interdependence and reciprocity (Saleh, 1998, p. 451). It articulates a cohesive and mutual social institution. In the light of these thoughts, privacy is revealed culturally as a multi-dimensional phenomenon whose physical appearance is descriptive within a specific cultural context. From the physical point of view, this appearance is based on the social and cultural factors of a particular region or sub-culture (Noori, 2010, p. 271). It summarizes the concept of spatial and physical organisation of the different components of the house to achieve an entire control over visual and physical interactions between men and women (Bianca, 2000, p. 79). It demonstrates moreover the thresholds of social relations between both genders in their daily actions and practices (Al-Thahab, A. *et. al.*, 2014, p. 239). This concept is also emphasised in Islamic cultures and societies through the identification of the concept of "*mahram*" referring to the woman. This can be clearly addressed in the following Qur'anic text:

"And tell the believing women ... not to reveal their adornment save to their own husbands or fathers or husbands' fathers, or their sons or their husbands' sons, or their brothers or their brothers' sons or sisters' sons, or their women, or their slaves, or male attendants who lack vigour, or children who know naught of women's nakedness..." (24:31).

While the concept of privacy, as communicating control system, relates to human behaviours, it is defined frequently as socio-physical boundary that separating two different types of spaces or

realms. The need to characterise privacy through its relationship with private/public realms is an essential part in home architecture (Ramezani and Hamidi, 2010, p. 501). Private and public domains are two interrelated concepts in several social contexts where each of them cannot be found or existed without the influence and presence of the other. These concepts perform two major socio-cultural aspects and have an important influence in drafting the spatial morphology of the built environment (Rahim & Abu Hassan, 2011, p. 115). Division of urban spaces into public and private is an expression of the relationship between the private and public in society. It reflects the deeper level of the intertwined relationship between the individual and society, or, in particular, between the self and the other (Abdelmonem, 2011, pp. 5-6).

3.6.2. The Public/Private Realms

The meaning of private/public realms can be viewed and understood simply by relating them to levels of space in order to display their indications and conceptualisations. Such pattern of spaces can take many forms and different kinds of layouts. Madanipour (2003) introduces several types of space according to the degree of privacy embodied in each of them. They range from the human level to the urban one, in a sequential order starting from the personal space to the interpersonal or impersonal. Private sphere can be recognised as part of human life which is largely detected under the complete control of the individual in a personal capacity. This is clearly allocated outside public knowledge or observation, and outside official or state control. The impact of the public domain appears to be accessible to all, in different degrees, except the inner world of the human. Private-public relationship starts precisely here and between the inner part of *consciousness* and the outside realm of the world (Madanipour, 2003, p. 7). Public spaces detect generally spheres, where public actions take place and social integration is confirmed with absolute accessibility and visibility like in living spaces. In contrast, private spaces relate to more separate spheres, such as bedrooms or female realms, which require *more privacy, secrecy, concealments and isolation from the attention of the public*. They constitute a kind of visual/aural restriction, or inaccessibility, from any kind of interference (Rahim & Abu Hassan, 2011, p. 116). Consequently, our lives take place in two different realms, the intimate, closed private realm on the one hand, and the open, shared public realm on the other hand. They are in completion with each other in a way that we cannot feel the private without the existence of the public. Their coexistence is realised in every single detail and action. Moreover, their meanings are shown and realised in relation to each other (Abdelmonem, 2011a, pp. 1-2).

Concept of public space has been discussed above in revealing and analysing the aspects of private domain. It is articulated through the display of house's fronts. Indeed, the outer wall of the house, in general, takes the indication of the *mask*, used by the individual, in all its communicative and spatial functions. It reveals and clarifies the boundary between private and public realms (Madanipour, 2003, p. 119). This notion appears clearly in the traditional courtyard house where the outer wall, with its few small openings, stands as solid and rigid boundary between private and public realms, and thus achieves the required degree of privacy.

3.6.3. The Concept of Boundary

What is important for this study is the concept of shell that frames and reflects the level of distinction in the relationship between the public and private sectors, as is the case with any other form of distinction. Separation between inner/outer spaces depends clearly on the concept of the boundary as a key factor in achieving this relationship architecturally, in the traditional home design (Adam, 1990, pp. 3-5). As much as they are methods of separating two realms and protecting them from the effects of each other, boundaries are actually the field of interface and communication between them, as long as they can control and promote permeability and social interaction. There may be a degree of verification in the creation of some links between the two realms in the design of spatial boundaries. Such boundaries can be remarked through social interaction among women in the harem section on the upper floor of the traditional houses. They can be, moreover, indicated by the presence of the lattice screen that covering the structural elements on the first level, '*shanashil*' (Figure 3.11), or visual communication, the women acquired in their observation of public actions that took place on the ground floor, or the courtyard, through the lattice screen of the '*Ursi*' or '*Kabishkan*' in Iraqi examples (Bianca, 2000, p. 74).



Figure 3.11: Upper-level cantilevered details (*shanashil*) in traditional houses as architectural treatments and physical boundaries for achieving the concept of privacy.

In general, boundaries, in all their classifications, are created and developed to isolate and identify the space owned by family members from those who are beyond such control and under the influence of the society as a whole.

3.6.4. Privacy in the Traditional Home Environment in Iraq

Arabs in general and Iraqis in particular employ different methods to build their houses in order to embrace their families and give them a degree of privacy. Nathan Witte (2003, cited in Georgiou,

2006, p. 7) states that in the discourse of architecture, the privacy is regarded *as something to be provided or withheld*. People's outlook toward several joints of the house is shrouded in a kind of intellectual, social and behavioural contemplation as well as religious instructions (Jiboye & Ogunshakin, 2010, pp. 117-118). The forces of the formation of the different spaces of the traditional house reveal a lot about residents' social habits, beliefs, rituals and cultural values, and embrace their originality and uniqueness (Khattab, 2005, p. 2). Despite the rigidity of the house plan, which is completely performed of many spaces around an open one in the case of the courtyard house, there is a considerable opportunity for informality with functions according to the degree of privacy acquired from each space. Informality allows flexibility in use with regard to socio-cultural needs as well as climatic requirements (Boudiaf, 2010, p. 36). The spatial arrangement of the house is such as to embrace the whole family in a protective shield and avoid their exposure to any unwanted interference (Hall, 1969, p. 145). A variety of architectural details, such as '*shanashil*', '*ursi*' and '*Kabishkan*' with sash windows onto the outside alley or the courtyard, helps to provide some sort of privacy for residents. These details are important for women to ensure the concept of gender segregation and achieve a kind of secure visual observation to the public outside the home or visitors inside, in addition to various environmental profits. They allow at the same time interpersonal relations between women of different neighbouring houses to be achieved while maintaining their socio-crucial status and privacy in the community. Both implicit and explicit socio-cultural and socio-religious beliefs and rituals represent key factors in the formation of domestic settings of the traditional house in Iraq. These factors define to a large extent what is really acceptable socially and what is not. The main focus here is in the privacy and visual-physical separation between men and women (Salama, 2003, pp. 2-3). Social separation can be achieved by walls, rules and behaviours that drawing significantly the notion of privacy and strengthening the concept of home as internal looking, exceedingly explained, *well-tended* and customised human institution (Abu-Gazzeh, 2010, p. 278).

Clear and identifiable division of spaces in the internal layout of the traditional house gives meaning to space and ensures its legibility. It emphasises on the ability to control social interactions in any particular space. Moreover, a progression of consecutive spaces with various degrees of privacy, according to Robinson (2001), can be acquired *to control over time, space, activity and social interaction* (Rahim & Abu Hassan, 2011, pp. 115-116). Hierarchy of spaces in the traditional house starts with the public realm represented in the immediate space outside the house, where it is completely unsafe and must be avoided by females, and continues inside with the invention of protective semi-public/semi-private spheres, and at last the private space through several rooms on the upper level of the house. Transitional spaces (semi-public/private) help residents to manage the rate of social interaction and confirm privacy. Moving from the intimate composition of the small residential quarter in the traditional morphology of the community represented in cluster of houses or, more larger, the *mahalla* as the basic neighbourhood in traditional contexts, privacy takes another form and meaning, and starts again playing a role in drafting the sequential order of spaces (Bianca, 2000, p. 80). Due to the complexity and interconnectedness of urban units with each other and, sometimes, with their socio-spatial

experiences, the concept of space is limited in analytical terms when it comes to the way people manage their daily socio-spatial practices of home (Saunders and Williams, 1988, p. 82). Significant structural hierarchy of public/private spaces is experienced when transitional spaces start taking their role clearly in the morphology of urban fabric. The transition from public to semi-public, for example, is revealed by gates or change in thresholds, as a signal to the emergence or emanation of another level of social, cultural and behavioural values and rules (Ben Saleh, 1997, pp. 167-168). Main functional factors behind the creation of such spaces are to provide a sense of change in the degree of privacy, social interaction and social cohesion that can be realised, accomplished or practised verbally and non-verbally. They offer residents a sense of security and belonging allowing them to act as they please without any intrusion from aliens. Having the semi-private space to gather with nearby neighbours enables them to manage their control over their behaviour and communication (Ramezani and Hamidi, 2010, p. 501). Most importantly, members of the same neighbourhood (*mahalla*) of both sexes in semi-private spaces treat each other in a kind of intimacy similar to those between members of the same family (Barakat, 1993, p. 64).

Based on previous concepts, we can assert that the main factors behind the formation of traditional living environments are based on and developed according to the notion of privacy, its rules and principles that emerged and demonstrated on the basis of concrete and coherent socio-cultural background represented in Islamic culture, laws and principles.

Synthesis

The main focus of this part of literature review in all its divisions is to support time-space-social values relationship as guiding principle in revealing the concepts behind the formation of the traditional built environment and defining its distinct features. The first part concerns the concept of tradition and its links with social and cultural aspects of Iraqi society. It shows its different definitions and scholars' viewpoints and interpretations. The second part discusses many approaches to the built environment for the purpose of choosing or deciding the one that can be relied on with relation to the main aim and concerns of the study. According to discussed attitudes, research analytical method will depend on values and attributes derived from organic, morphological, social and everyday life patterns with an intensive reliance on socio-cultural factors of Iraqi society. Latter factors will be investigated thoroughly as key references in approaching the built form that is sustained socially and culturally. The last part deals with the concept of privacy as the main principle that defined and produced the unique traditional built form. This notion will be considered as a reference point for the analysis of research, specifically in comparing the selected case studies and traditional context of the wider *mahalla*. The following chapter will deal with and discuss thoroughly the traditional home and *mahalla* in order to draw a distinct image of the reality of Iraqi traditional built environment with specific emphasis on society's social and cultural values.

CHAPTER IV

HOME AND '*MAHALLA*' IN IRAQI TRADITIONAL CONTEXTS

4.1. The Traditional Neighbourhood Unit (*Mahalla*)

Although the main focus of the study on the house and social and cultural values, as the main factors in the formation of space in traditional settings, it is important to recognise and highlight the concept of the *mahalla*, as the basic structure for the local community in traditional Iraqi contexts. It continues to play a specific role, but more important, in people's lives and human settlements in parallel with increased transformations that have taken place on the role of family, work and other aspects of social life. Its importance is stationed in that it reveals an essential reference in preserving strong social bonds and good-neighbourly relationships among residents and users (Forrest and Kearns, 2001, pp. 21-28). Social solidarity, which describes the strong links and good neighbourly relations between the people in the *mahalla*, determines and forms its social, cultural and physical nature, and explains the concept of the *mahalla* as a great home for all its residents. Therefore, the study will pursue the concept of home as a reflection and embodiment of the whole urban fabric. Analysing the concept of the home requires an understanding of the notion and structure of the residential quarter (*mahalla*), and the manner in which this compound reflects the social, cultural, spatial and physical attributes of the house. Traditional neighbourhood (*mahalla*) in Iraq, as in other parts of the Arab world, performs and constructs an inclusive integration of inhabitants' social, cultural and behavioural interactions within a specific spatial organisation and architectural arrangement. This kind of mutual relations produced a kind of homogenised structural and organised spatial configuration in which each part is distinguished in its morphological relation with nearby quarters. However, integrated relationships between home and the camp draw spatial, physical and architectural features of the house.

In this chapter, a thoroughly investigation into social, cultural, physical and spatial qualities of the *mahalla* will be addressed in order to envision the process of development of this compound, with a great emphasis on its relationship with the idea of home. Entire analysis of the spatial and architectural composition of *mahalla* will be unfolded to view the concept of homogeneity between the spatial structure and socio-cultural values embodied by this spontaneous and compressed form.

4.1.1. Primary Conceptualisation of the Neighbourhood unit (*Mahalla*)

Neighbourhood unit has a distinctive place in built environmental studies over a long period of time. It is considered and perceived as primary quarter within the urban fabric of the city (Herbert, 1963, p. 181). Each unit consists of several elements, such as the local market, a religious organisation and service base for local industries and requirements (Rastan, 1990, p. 12). This component is primarily for residential purposes, as is evident from its name. However, it is not equivalent to the entire city or urban community, but part of it.

Many definitions are demonstrated to describe and define the meaning and dimensions of this element. Rapoport (1977) defines the neighbourhood unit, as a kind of homogeneous contexts,

reference to common internal images and shared desires to achieve and maintain life, culture and religion. Patsy Healey, in (1998), pointed out that the neighbourhood has always provided fertile ground for the analysis of social relations and daily practices as the combined factors of socio-spatial settings (Morrison, 2003, p. 117). Banerjee and Baer, in (1984), viewed the neighbourhood as a way of structuring, ordering and presenting urban society. Along this vein and with regard to its earlier settings in the social history of human beings, it is a fact of nature and there whenever a group of people share a place. Martin Bulmer (1986, p. 1) argues that the neighbourhood unit comprises technical meaning in addition to personal and social definitions. Broadly speaking, it encompasses two general connotations including physical proximity to given object of attention and intimacy association between people living close to each other. This implies the existence of distinguishable qualities of physical properties and social relations between individuals and the built environment within adjacent contexts. Regarding past ideas, Ruth Glass, (1948), contends that a neighbourhood is a particular regional gathering; unmistakable by uprightness of the particular physical qualities of the territory and the particular social attributes of the occupants (Mousavi, 1998, pp. 57-58). This notion is general and unclear in containing the relationship between both social and physical factors. It does not diagnose what kind of social and cultural characteristics are involved or have had a clear impact in shaping the traditional neighbourhood (*mahalla*). However, its meaning, according to Roderick McKenzie of the Chicago school of urban sociology, is used so loosely and with clear changing content (Mousavi, 1998, p. 55). Structural and functional approach to the neighbourhood unit, as first conceived by Clarence Perry (1939), was presented as the outcome of an attempt to provide the right design that embraces social values, called by modernity, in the physical configuration that will enhance the safety, well-being and health of its users (Banerjee & Baer, 1984, p. 19). The school, in Perry's theory, is displayed as the social and cultural centre. Neighbourhood unit includes a variety of socio-cultural variables and represents the base of different social categories. Philip Olson (1982) argues that social and organisational factors of residential activities are determinant values in shaping or drafting the behaviour of individuals. In his opinion of urban neighbourhoods, Olson identifies five themes where each of them offers both theoretical and empirical contributions. These positions describe the neighbourhood as a form of social organisation, ideology, behavioural determinant, a consequence of social organisation and social network (Olson, 1982, pp. 491-518). These factors are based on the investigation of a variety of social and cultural contexts and vary according to various social factors.

The main focus of the following discussion will be addressed to study the concept and importance of the *mahalla*, as a traditional neighbourhood in Iraq, within the spatial and physical hierarchy of the whole urban fabric.

4.1.2. The Notion of the Traditional Neighbourhood Unit (*Mahalla*)

The term '*quarter*' differs in name from place to place or society to another. In Baghdad, Mosul and other Iraqi cities as well as Aleppo, the word is referred to as '*Mahalla*'. In Cairo and

Damascus, it is known as '*Harra*', '*Rabea*' or '*Hella*'. In Morocco, it is called '*Hawma*' wherein the Arabian Peninsula; local residents refer to it as '*Harra*', '*Haie*' or '*Ferreeg*'. Residential quarters are uniquely homogeneous units and the sum of which constitutes a heterogeneous whole. The notion of neighbourhood unit (*mahalla*) in language is derived from the term 'origin' as 'place'; thus, a place, defined by its dwellers, is the *mahalla* of those people (Rastan, 1990, p. 12). There are many linguistic definitions of the term '*mahalla*' in Arabic dictionaries of meanings. Al-Wassit dictionary, for example, defines it as the place that consisting of one or two houses. The dictionary of contemporary Arabic language describes it as a part of the city where people in all their social and economic levels live or reside in, or it is particularly the people's house.

Historically speaking, the topic of *mahalla* was evolved from the planned sectors '*Khitat*' of early built environments in Iraq such as Al-Basra and Al-Kufa. Its functional responsibilities involve social and economic dimensions (Abdelmonem, 2015, pp. 43-44). Many terms of residential quarters came, as mentioned above, from this '*Khitat*'. Such '*Khitta*', in the singular, means a plan and refers to the residential quarter that was assigned to a group of people who resides (*halla*) in a particular place. Al-Mawardi by the 7th century argued, with respect to the planning of al-Basra, that: 'People made the city as sectors '*Khitat*', (singular: '*Khitta*'), in connection with their various tribes'. In line with this and with respect to his argument about the divisions inside the *Khitta*, Al Balatheri (892) said that 'people planned (*ekhtatta*), built their dwellers and lived or resided (*Halla*) in'. A similar meaning can be noticed in Al-Tibari's argument about the city of Al-Kufa when he said that: 'the city was divided into quarters or sectors (*Khitat*) made for different tribes' (Al Hathloul, 2011, p. 28). Formally-planned sectors, '*Khitat*', were first transformed into *mahallas* (neighbourhoods) in the establishment of the city of Hilla, whose name linguistically, according to Yousif Karkusk in his book 'The history of Al-Hilla (Ta'arikh Al-Hilla)', refers to or derives from the verb '*halla*', which means live or reside in certain place. In his book 'Arabic Islamic Cities'. Hakim (1986, p. 64) characterised the *mahalla* as *the quarter that housed people of a common ethnic or social-cultural/tribal background*. Complex socio-spatial structures of Iraqi neighbourhood units (*mahallas*) are integrated and interconnected in a homogeneous form in the absence of formal political control. This led to organic urban form that revealing the diversity of socio-cultural, socio-spatial, physical, political, economic and religious factors alike. It shows and characterises a variety of functional facilities compressed in the same context. This mechanism achieves a form of familiarity in which various intimate activities and practices can be carried out in public spaces or the same alley (Abu-Lughod, 1987, pp. 163-164; Holden, 2004, p. 106). An integrated entity or dynamic characteristic of the neighbourhood (*mahalla*) retains and maintains family's social aspects, cultural beliefs, Islamic morals and traditions (Abdelmonem, 2015, p. 48).

Three intermediate contexts, according to Adel A. Ismail (1972), are referenced in the hierarchy and arrangement of the *mahalla* including the cluster, the pedestrian precinct and the residential quarter. The first represents a group of individual houses shared the same closed and narrowed alley, called '*agd*', embodying the main ingredient for the neighbourly life. The second describes a group of residential livings, which are within a walking distance from each other and sharing similar communal facilities. Many pedestrian precincts, the local market and religious

institutions constitute the last group (Ismail, 1972, pp. 113-123). However, there is no such distinction between quarters and pedestrian precincts in traditional contexts since all quarters are precincts based on pedestrian movements. From this point of view, the traditional urban fabric was divided into many divisions or quarters, which, in turn, were divided into smaller units, and thus formed the spatial morphology of the *mahalla*. The urban communities, according to Lapidus (1967), were separated into locale called *harat*, *mahallat* or *akhtat*. These were private quarters with a small local market and perhaps workshops. They typically confined from the clamor of the principle focal city bazaars, while “*many of them, though not everyone need have been a solidarity, were closely knit and homogeneous communities*” (1967, p. 85, cited in Al-Lahham, 2012, p. 105). In line with this, Ervin Galantay (1987, p. 10) tackles the social hierarchy of the various components of the built and urban fabric. He argues that:

“... on a somewhat larger scale of social organization we find the neighbourhood completing the hierarchy of introverted cells from the room, to the courthouse, the cluster with its semi-private alley and to the Mahalla with its mosque, school, hammam (public bath), etc., separated from other neighbourhoods by streets carrying through traffic”.

According to previous concepts, we can devise or conclude an interwoven social, cultural and spatial relationship between the different components of the whole built form. The question here is: *What social aspects could be drawn from the traditional neighbourhood (mahalla) and are in a relationship with, or successively embody the mutual influence and coherent idea of home?*

4.1.2.1 The Concept of Social Space in Traditional Neighbourhood Unit (Mahalla)

The successive sequence of public spaces is an effective mechanism in the formulation of the spatial morphology of the traditional form of urban areas. Interrelationships are what distinguish a coherent interaction between the public and private sectors in traditional contexts. These zones, according to Stanford Anderson (1991, p. 342), These areas are organised in a more orderly public environment, with respect to the hierarchy of spaces, as a place of connection, as the shift from public to private, and as a container for a range of public applications. Hierarchy of social spaces helps the individual to place himself, his reactions and feelings in an intelligible and understandable order (Abdelmonem, 2011b, p. 1002). Social spaces, in this context, are separate from each other, but totally interdependent in a way that each of them cannot be investigated without taking into account the host or opposite side. They are simply located and organised without any rupture of the urban fabric socially and culturally by placing major concerns on an entire understanding of the concept of public/private, especially in residential districts. In this system, social, cultural and religious factors, as well as users' daily affairs, are revealed as main regulators in most traditional neighbourhoods in the Arab world as it is the case in Iraq (Kiet, 2010, p. 43) (Figure 4.1).

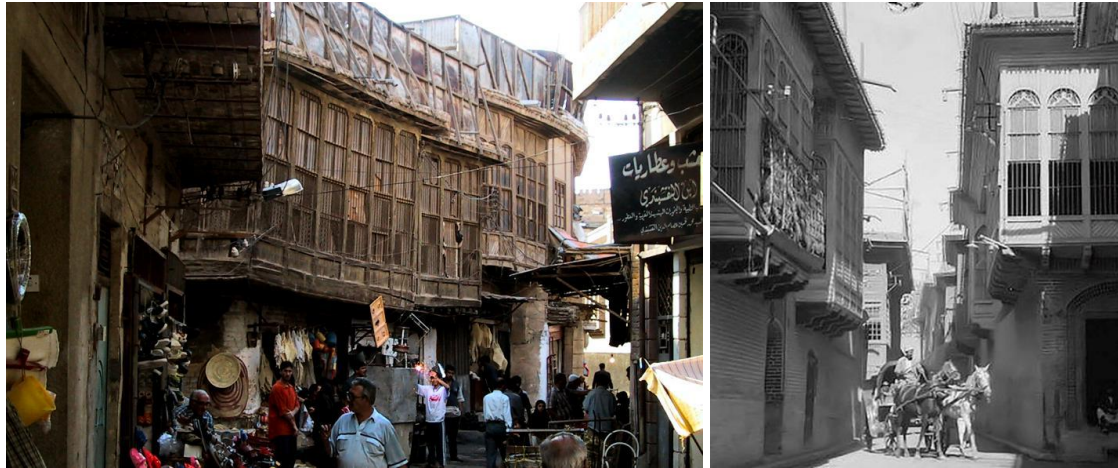


Figure 4.1: Daily practices and interactions in traditional contexts in Baghdad-Iraq

(Source: Hussein, 2013, p. 7)

Circulation network of the *mahalla* is developed not only to connect or interrelate the various components of the urban fabric spatially and physically but to match the cultural character of the space and social needs of individuals in a harmonious way. The hierarchy of open spaces and regulatory system of transitional realms (semi-public/private) help largely individuals and social groups to manage the rate of their interactions and interconnectedness with each other. They allow at the same time for meeting the basic requirements of social segregation and/or integration for both genders in a structured and organised method. These concepts constitute the primary focus in the social and intellectual construction of the *mahalla* (Ramezani & Hamidi, 2010, pp. 505-506). These actions can be largely observed in the social description of many scholars, sociologists and historians about the social life in traditional contexts as in the work of Dr. Ali Al-Wardi about the nature of Iraqi society, and the work of MG. Abdelmonem about the social life in the Hawari of Old Cairo and others. While people in public spaces interacts each other freely, the semi-private/public space allows those from the same residential cluster to gather socially in specific time's intervals and thus convert the social connotation of space into private. This daily social attitude is largely practised in the narrow alley (*agd*) of the single cluster when women of neighbouring units gather at certain times for the exchange of chatter while the man is beyond the scope of the *mahalla*. It is moreover inappropriate the return of the man in such times to the house for any reason, whatsoever to promote the transitional concept of space and to maintain the privacy and position of woman in Iraqi society. On the other hand, the public sphere can be identified as space where individuals can take their personal masks on in their interaction with each other revealing their social fronts and displaying the borders between the public and the personal sphere of the 'self'. Latter notion describes the utmost private connotation of the individual (Madanipour, 2003, p. 5). The thin follicular scarf, Iraqi women put on when walking through public spaces, reflects the main meaning of this concept. This intelligible detail, in addition to its religious and moral sources and disciplines, allows women *only* seeing others in public spaces. This concept reflects, on the other hand, the meaning of lattice-wood components of the '*shanashil*' or '*ursi*' at the first floor of the traditional courtyard house (Figure 4.2). These

ingredients are often used by women to observe, monitor and control people in the public alley or visitors, who may on certain occasions be invited by males and used the ground floor of the house. The latter circumstance affects the social sphere of the courtyard and leads to transforming its semi-private/public nature into public.

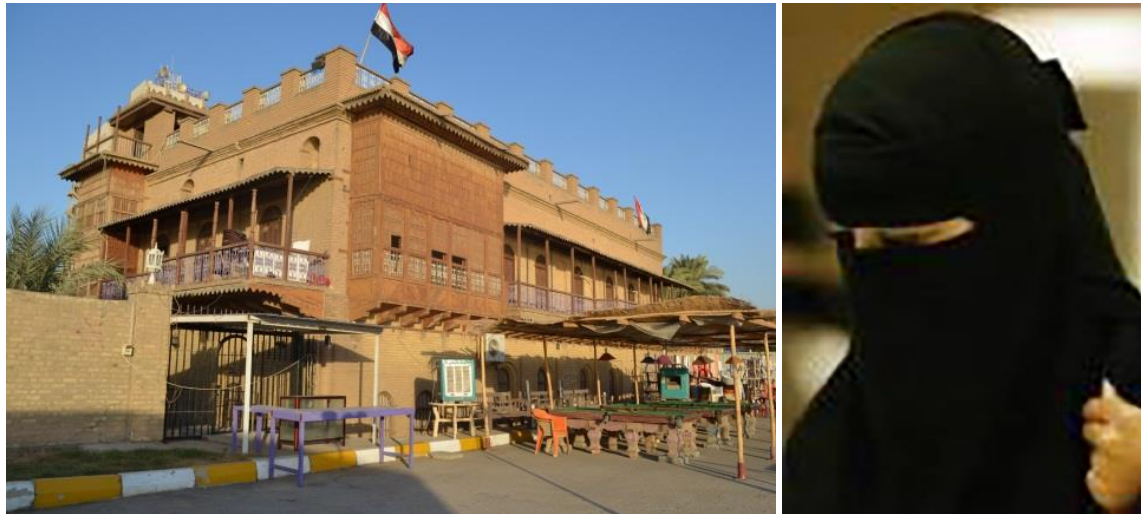


Figure 4.2: The upper-level closed reception and *shanashil* in Al-Naqib house in Baghdad-Iraq (Left); woman with scarf (Right), reflecting and fostering the concept of privacy

Social sphere, for the philosopher Thomas Nagel (1998), is severely limited, and with a wide range of interpretations and applications with regard to its context (Madanipour, 2003, p. 125). It would be possible to create a balanced importance between public and private domains. The private demonstrates the sphere of freedom while the public can be managed by many rules, conventions and '*urfs*' according to the viewpoint of some scholars (Hakim, 1994, pp. 109-110). To be more precise, the construction of privacy and its distinction from the public domain form powerful criticisms in the spatial sequence of *mahalla*'s spaces. The social division of the different realms of space is a natural phenomenon and powerful ideological tool in promoting a set of structured and systematic inequalities between different social groups through favouring the interest of specific one at the expense of others. It legitimates the powerful and dominance of specific groups over others at a more personal level. This social distinction is recognised as an acknowledged and dynamic method promoted by solid and coherent rules, morals and traditions. The border between these worlds is often shaded instead of clear. The balance between the two, rather than the abolition of distinction, constitutes an inevitable need of social life, which has been identified through the achievement of clear processes for change (Madanipour, 1996, pp. 93-117).

4.1.2.2. Socio-Spatial Notion of the Neighbourhood Unit '*Mahalla*'

Structural fabric of the traditional form is subdivided into many quarters or cells. It is organised in a specific manner that allows each cellular unit to work separately and operate socially, culturally and physically on its own, as an integrated unit within the whole urban fabric. This concept can be clearly shown through the convergence in the organisational structure of traditional *mahallas* in

the city of Kadhimiya in Iraq, Al-Tell, Qatana, Dabagh-khana and Shiyoukh, or the interlocking structure of the Hawari in Old Cairo. In this sense, each neighbourhood (*mahalla*) refers to a specific social and cultural cell identified by certain physical boundaries aligned or consistent with surrounding alleys (Abdelmonem, 2015, p. 47). These cells are characterised by distinct gates or thresholds, such as the physical limits that distinguish most of Iraq's traditional neighbourhoods.

Social and spatial factors identify entirely the nature of each *mahalla* in a way that makes it different from the economic-based one (such as an industrial or commercial quarter) in terms of habits, customs and traditions. This main characteristic is expressed in the urban subdivisions between various occupations or ethnoreligious quarters such as respectively, the A'adhamiyeh and Kadhimiya quarters in Baghdad (Figure 4.3). The latter can be classified into one main neighbourhood (*mahalla*) due to its compactness nature, along the local thoroughfare (*Darb*), and some individual clusters and lanes within (Rastan, 1990, p. 121). Some quarters and alleys are unified on the basis of specific economic activity or, in other terms, the specialisation of a certain craft in many contexts as is the case with the “*glass alley (aljaam's agd)*” in al-Rashid district in Baghdad. These quarters express people's affiliations as determinable elements of the city (Raouf, 1984, p. 370). The terms, neighbourhood and community, are often used interchangeably according to the social, cultural or economic properties of the environment. J. Cater and T. Jones (1989) have tried to distinguish both terms by linking the neighbourhood with physical settings while community with socio-cultural factors. According to their study, the community is considered to be a network of social interactions, physical settings and boundaries, and is largely based on mutual interests and influences. It concerns, moreover, peoples' basic needs and desires in their everyday lives and practices that taking place in a certain physical phenomenon or organisation (Higgitt and Memken, 2001, p. 31). On the other hand, Akbar (1992) refers the change in the social and cultural organisation of the built environment to physical factors rather than socio-cultural values (Abdelmonem, 2015, p. 48).



Figure 4.3: The built and urban morphology of al-Kadhimiya district in Iraq in 1921
(Source: Abrahem, 2008, p. 86)

Socially speaking, some residential quarters are established and constructed around the framework of extended families, kinship and social ties of different groups inhabited each quarter as is the case with the Jewish quarter (*Altawrat mahalla*) in Baghdad where the majority of its residents share similar social and ethical relations. There is a clear trend to live with others of the same socio-cultural background, to relate to the same physical environment that enables them to share similar values, ideas and rules, and to understand or respond to the same symbols, interaction agreements, intensity and lifestyle form (Rapoport, 1977, pp. 249-250). This point of view can be clearly exercised in the case of Kadhimiya, in Baghdad, and other contexts in which religious values play a key role in shaping their social, cultural and physical characteristics. Alleys or local streets are primary public avenues binding together a cluster of individual dwellings within the environment of the residential quarter (Azzam, 1993, pp. 16-17). Moreover, district boundaries do not place restrictions on the social association, friendship relations, kinship and patronage, and activity lines that penetrate the tissue of the *mahalla*. The traditional quarter does foster a distinct sort of local relations in which, according to Abraham Marcus (1989), it draws residents in an environment of intimacy, mutual interests and collective commitments, which, for better or worse, are shared with neighbours (Azzam, 1993, p. 16). This pattern of socio-cultural relations promotes the concept of wholeness in the urban fabric of the built environment.

4.1.2.3. The Concept of Gender Segregation

Gender segregation is an important social factor in Iraqi society. It has impressive impacts on space organisation and morphology of the traditional urban fabric. Islam, as the main religion of Iraqi society, stresses, in several occasions, on this concept and maintenance and protection of what is characterised as '*aura*'. This concept embodies a serious and decisive factor in Islamic culture. Reputation and prestige of the family in society depends largely on its focus and preservation of this value socially and culturally (Al-Wardi, 2009, pp. 213-214; Moghadam, 2003, p.4). Therefore, the creation of regulated man-woman environment is put forward as an influential principle in the structure of the neighbourhood unit (*mahalla*). However, physically distinctive areas are not the only methods in mixed-gender environments. Establishment of visually structured and separated contexts are of more importance and effective, as protective means of strengthening privacy and preventing any visual contact between both genders. In discussing the various aspects of urban spaces, visual, spatial and physical distance should be considered in conjunction with gender segregation and privacy. These two factors have been achieved by, for example, the sequential form and organisation of social spaces from the most public to the other private, the presence of transitional realms, the method of placing windows and openings in the same house or opposite houses, and the regulated height of building structures. This mechanism provides another way to control and regulate the visual contact between sexes for the purpose of promoting the privacy of the family.

Exchanged responsibilities between families of the same cluster towards each other and respecting these relations are important criteria in achieving and regulating privacy. This fact is

highly manifested in the formation of the '*shanashil*' with their lattice wood screen panels that cover their cantilevered parts in the void sphere of the *mahalla*. Throughout these components, women can socially communicate each other or observe and monitor the users of public alleys without being realised, but of those who have specific family relationships. They achieve, through this daily practice, a strangely asymmetrical reality (Abu-Lughod, 1987, p. 163; Warren and Fathi, 1982, p. 49). Moreover, women can interact with each other in certain periods of the day, especially when men outside the *mahalla*, and where public corridors are almost empty except for children. This female social contact happens often from behind the main door or around the entrance in small groups. Women are more freely in their social interactions and daily practices in the semi-private space of the residential cluster, which is called '*agd*' or '*darbuna*', where the entry of these spaces is often controlled by gates, thresholds or members of the same cluster.

In the light of this notion, male and female of the same *mahalla* treat each other with a degree of familiarity and intimacy similar to that existing among residents of the same family, even if they are outside its borders. This behaviour shows how men take the responsibility of protecting *mahalla*'s women inside and outside it. All members of the *mahalla* look at women as their sisters or part of their families and do not hesitate to intervene to save or defend them when they feel their exposure to any problem within and outside the borders of the *mahalla* (Al-Wardi, 2009, pp. 215). This responsibility covers what women do, act or behave in any context. This fact, as well as the existence of *mahalla*'s protectors (*futuwwat*), give the female a sense of self-confidence and affirm her safety and security wherever she goes. It achieves the concept of defensible space, stated by Oscar Newman in 1972 in his description of and search for architectural solutions regarding the rising disorder in contemporary societies (Figure 4.4). In this vein, any intruder or stranger will be monitored, and his presence will be under suspect and of a challenge. This concept maximises the status of the *mahalla* among other communities. It affirms and emphasises, in turn, its role in achieving the socio-cultural meaning of sustainability (Abu-Lughod, 1987, pp. 167-168). The main objective of this social factor is the separation of the private sector from the public visually and physically so that men can circulate freely in the corridors and passages of the *mahalla* and various corners and spaces of the residential area without interfering with women's system of activities and behaviour. Throughout this mechanism, gender segregation, as a socio-cultural requirement, can be achieved on the home range; between family members, in the scope of the neighbourhood unit (*mahalla*) and the whole urban fabric.

- (1) Public space;
- (2) Semi-public space;
- (3) Semi private space;
- (4) Private space

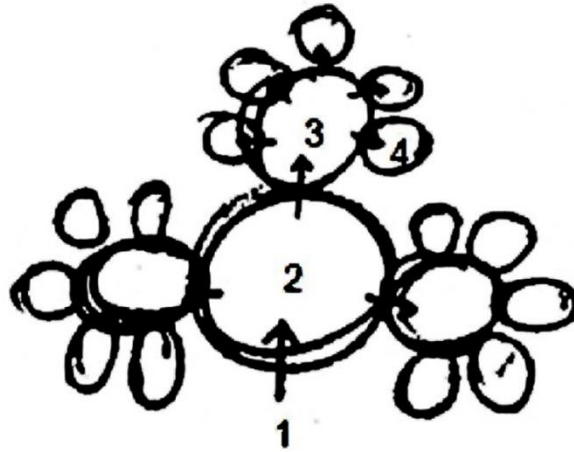


Figure 4.4: The traditional spatial hierarchy introduced by Newman (1972) for the creation of secure and safe residential contexts (Source: Ramezani and Hamidi, 2010, p. 506)

4.1.3. Architectural Composition of the Neighbourhood Unit ‘Mahalla’

Residential neighbourhood’s structure is created and enhanced by powerful small communities in a way highlighting a trustworthy internal unity. This type of unity is dramatically different from the infertile uniformity created by the addition and subdivision nature of modern mechanical modes (Bianca, 2000, p. 157). The architecture of the traditional *mahalla*, according to Abdelmonem (2010, p. 49), is characterised by its dynamic and flexible nature to adapt to changing needs and circumstances. On-going and growing social changes create an irregularly built form upon the early regular one by the *filling in vacant* and *left-over* land mechanism. This process creates a homogeneous form specified by many boundaries which are consistent and in line with alleys or are surrounded by main accesses. The spatial arrangement of shared public spheres of the alleys defines the basis of *mahalla*’s boundaries referring to the starting point of public spaces, the main markets (*suqs*), towards the most private realm of home (Abdelmonem, 2011b, p. 997).

Spatially speaking, the main spines of the urban fabric connecting the gates with the central core are determined by numerous shops, which constitute the main commercial hub for residents and users. Buildings, surrounding the main spine, and occasional rows of caravanserais behind them act as protective shields for residential districts ‘*mahallat*’, keeping them away from any undesirable intrusion (Bianca, 2000, pp. 146-147). Commercial structures around the main spine are important socially, culturally and economically such as those built during the establishment of al-Rashid Street in Baghdad. Many of them are still using as apartments or hotels, but the function of most of them have been converted into offices or shops for premises at ground level, or demolished for economic reasons, as long as the price per square metre in these areas is considerably high. Many voids in the physical facade of these buildings, sometimes with gates or thresholds, are placed carefully between rows of shops determining the main entries to residential quarters. These gates or thresholds embody the concept of the transition sphere, from the most public to the semi-public, followed by an elaborate system of narrow alleys, internal accesses, sometimes with gates, before reaching the thresholds for the individual housing unit. The last

level represents the final transition mechanism to the private sphere of the house on the other side of the entrance (Bianca, 2000, p. 149). The benefit of this dynamic mechanism is to monitor and manage the flow of people between different social spaces in an arrangement that achieves an unmistakable sense of privacy and inclusion.

Entries to residential neighbourhoods are surrounded by one or two-levelled commercial or residential premises above an economic-based ground level emphasising the public status of the main thoroughfare (*shari'*) as the vital artery of the city. This type is reflected in the spatial and physical organisation of commercial premises and structures set for al-Rashid Street in Baghdad or Zahra'a Street and main thoroughfares in the city of Kadhimiya (Figure 4.5). Semi-public spaces bind the various residential parts of the *mahalla* with each other in an organic and integrated form that providing a high level of flexibility. Users of these spaces are residents or are almost known to all residents. Others are monitored by, or their behaviours will be under the control of *mahalla's* protectors (*futuwwat*), children and women. The former category of society often places in or around transition points. Social interaction in these spaces differs significantly from that in the public or the subsequent semi-private. Meanwhile, Formation of these realms and boundaries is controlled physically and socially by a set of norms and conventions. The former, for example, is determined through adjusting their dimensions which must have the minimum, 3.23m-3.50m as listed by Hakim (1986), while the latter is controlled by understanding and applying the rules of Islamic culture, as well as inherited shared standards and agreements. These factors are common in most societies, and have become a pattern of habits, customs and traditions of the population (Hakim, {1982} 1994, p. 123; Morris, 1995, p. 389). Structural composition and spatial organisation of the house reflect the structure of the main alleyway (*shari'*) and the entire structure of the *mahalla*. They are characterised by a high, solid and continuous wall with doors' openings, high-situated windows, wind catchers (*Badgirs*) and protruding structures, of screened and balconied cantilevers stand out from upper rooms towards the public sphere of the alley. Protrusions, with their highly-decorated wood screens, are called '*shanashil*', and have an essential socio-cultural role, as well as their environmental benefits and potentials. Doors represent the main entrances to traditional and often introverted houses which, in some cases,



Figure 4.5: The spatial and physical organisation set for al-Rashid Street in Baghdad-Iraq showing the functional attributes of surrounding properties

take place from these passages according to space available and the location of the residential unit. The majority of these doors are opened to the semi-private sphere of the alley (*agd*) (Figure 4.6). The latter, as mentioned previously, gives women more freedom to interact each other socially. It is considered as private space in specific occasions and certain periods of time. Semi-private spaces are also identified by thresholds or gates and characterised physically by their striking narrow width. These routes are semi-closed, and serve a group of families that often have the same kinship or return to the same clan (Warren and Fathi, 1982, p. 44). The identity of each residential cluster is physically identified by more or less hidden enclosures and consists of continuous outer walls of a group of houses developed around a common dead-end alley (Bianca, 2000, p. 152). This residential cluster may become more attractive and full of social interactions in specific periods. In such occasions, social purposes and activities may stretch outside the private sphere of the individual house and towards the semi-private realm of the alley, or vice versa, introducing homogeneous, flexible and intertwined relations between different spaces socially and physically.

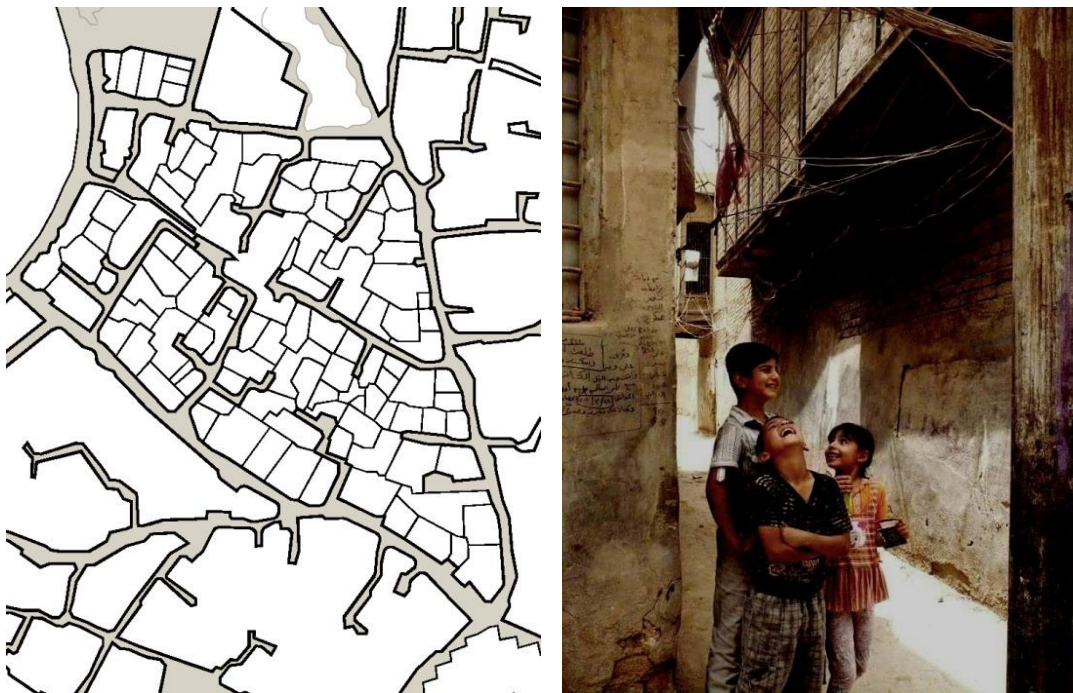


Figure 4.6: The alley (*agd*) in the traditional residential district of *Al-Tell mahalla* in Kadhimiya-Iraq

Traditional *mahalla* embodies, according to many scholarly studies, the self-reliance component, in the sense that it is virtually independent in the management of its basic shared facilities such as the local mosque, one or several public baths (*hammam*) for each gender, public ovens (*afran*) and a number of fountains or *salsabils* (Bianca, 2000, p. 152). It is considered as an important socio-cultural compound that reflecting and achieving privacy, social solidarity, gender segregation and others. Moreover, it offers residents a sense of safety, security and belonging by allowing them, especially females, to act as if they are home, embodying the concept of the defensible district. The harmonious interconnectedness between social spaces forms and achieves the distinct aspects of the *mahalla* socially and physically. Local social interactions,

familiar socio-cultural aspects and active daily practices, within the context of the *mahalla*, constitute impressive features and significant sources to provide comfort and security. At the same time, it highlights and embodies, through its unique form, distinctive cultural identity (Abdelmonem, 2011b, p. 999). These aspects illustrate the potential of sustainability through the realisation of a distinct pattern of social cohesion.

Consequently, the *mahalla* has proceeded over time as of key significance in figuring and executing social identity, as well as other sources that rely largely on underlying individual and collective values and time-activity-space mutual relationship within the entire urban context. The dominance of the small community, according to Henning and Lieberg, is important in the promotion and development of solid social associations between users (Forrest and Kearns, 2001, pp. 2129-2130).

4.1.4. The Notion of Compactness in the Traditional *Mahalla*

In his analysis of the organic theory, Gilbert Herbert (1963, p. 183) asserts that an organic entire is one whose parts are in relatedness. Each part is a substance, a special truth; the crucial way of this element, nonetheless, lies in an innovative combination of its relations to different things. The uniqueness of each part accomplishes criticalness and meaning just as it is found in relationship to different parts and to the entirety. Herbert unfolds, in this argument, the structural and spatial concept for compactly built form. The spontaneous pattern of the traditional built form has been developed in compact mode, where micro and macro physical compounds, with all their shared facilities, inbuilt public spaces and different movement patterns, located in an integrated approach in order to achieve the needs of both the group and the individual. Compactness of the central core shows exclusive reliance on pedestrian movement pattern, that pressing public places to be part of the market (*aswaq*). It is supposed to produce compensatory open spaces covering the main traffic lanes allocated to be closer to specialised functions and social needs. People, in this successive and highly articulated complex, exercise a certain sense of continuity that transcends the limits of the individual structural compound and connects the various social and cultural spheres of public life (Holden, 2004, pp. 105-106). This can be clearly shown in other traditional contexts in the Arab world as it is the case in Morocco, Algeria and Saudi Arabia (Figure 4.7).

The traditional *mahalla*, through its mechanisms, has achieved a high degree of diversity in unity. This unit, according to Herbert (1963), is not homogeneous or monolithic in the abstract meaning but symbolises the unity of a variety of interrelated components. It is not the mechanical unity that can be drafted by adding identical units, but the unity of the whole that organically embraces and includes its various parts. *As a unity in diversity, variety is its essence* (Herbert, 1963, p. 200). Spatial character of each individual realm in this compact structure has been carefully retained through its interaction with neighbouring units by some architectural devices, such as internal accesses, intermediate gateways, doors and thresholds. Different quarters and facilities of the compact form are looked as being covered by or included within the same tent and under the same roof as compared with spacious, but interrelated, properties of the single house. Residential

neighbourhoods emphasise the private nature of the house, and, in accordance with similar principles, the formation of public places, but with a strong focus on achieving intermediate corridors or passages (Bianca, 2000, p. 148). Moreover, the *mahalla* reflects in itself the concept of self-sufficiency within a compact form of the whole. In this perspective, where different activity systems and facilities meet the needs of people in their daily practices, can be and customised in every neighbourhood reflects the concept of decentralisation of the compact and sustainable built form, according to contemporary perceptions. The presence of many integrated local commercial centres, shops (*dakakin*), within the urban fabric of *mahalla*, strengthens the concept of '*multiple compact quarters*'. These facilities serve *mahalla's* residents, with no need to reach the central core of the urban fabric for the purpose of collecting or acquiring life necessities or urgent needs. In line with this concept, small local markets are located around public areas and almost at intersecting points of various alleys. Local markets are largely used by families, and in particular women and children, of neighbouring residential units (Figure 4.8). This concept is a replacement of the old centralised form in contemporary urban designs where almost all facilities and activities are located in one area (Kiet, 2010, pp. 38-39).

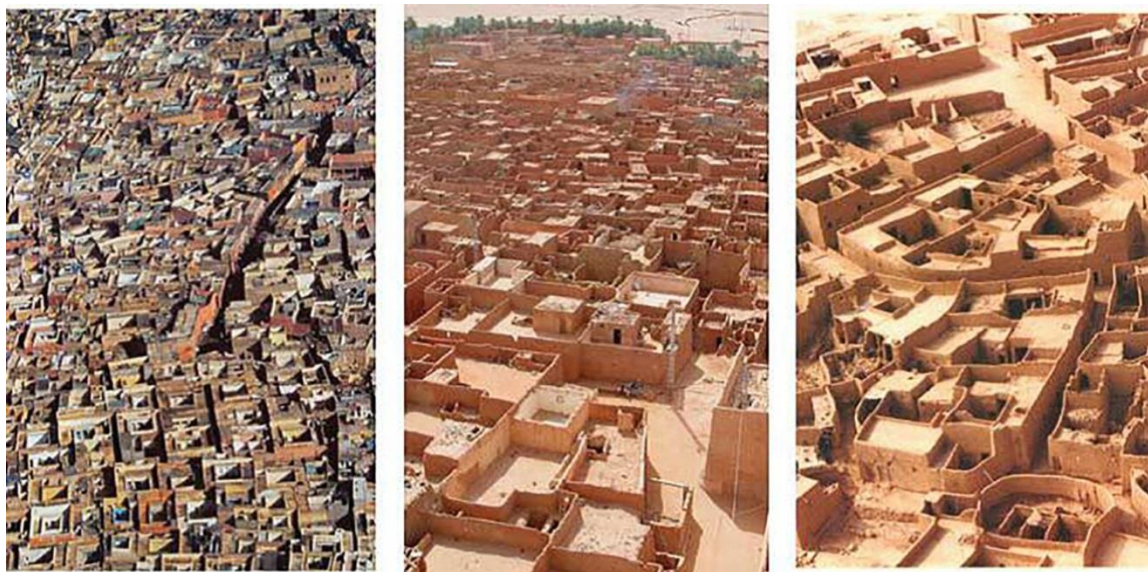


Figure 4.7: Images of the traditional urban fabric of many cities revealing the similarity in their complex urban tissues; Left: Fez (Morocco); Middle: Tamentit (Algeria); Right: A Village in Saudi Arabia (Source: Ben-Hamouche, 2009, p. 23).

Organic form achieves and offers a diversity of socio-cultural organisations, physical components and functional facilities compressed in the same context. These features reveal the coherent nature of man-environment relations which reflect the socio-cultural laws, conventions and ethics of Islam, in Iraqi society, with full respect for the concepts of gender segregation, social solidarity and privacy. This mechanism achieves a form of intimacy and familiarity in which a variety of activities can be carried out in the same alley. It provides solid evidence for the safe and secure nature of public spaces for both sexes and supports the concept of the *mahalla* as a big house (Holden, 2004, pp. 105-106). In this vein, people practice different types of social and cultural interactions in different periods of the day and thus realising and achieving the concept of

social/cultural compactness of traditional *mahalla*. The contemporary concept of compactness refers to urban connectivity and continuity and displays crucial typology, which must be implemented in order to achieve sustainability. Recent scholarly studies have considered the concept of compact neighbourhood as a key approach to achieving sustainability in all its aspects, values and factors. Heidi Dumreicher *et. al.* (2000) argues that sustainable built environment ought to be *compact, dense, diverse and highly integrated*. These categories can be clearly noted and practised in the social, cultural, physical and spatial configuration of the *mahalla* (Jabareen, 2006, pp. 139-140).



Figure 4.8: The local market in the traditional neighbourhood unit (*mahalla*) showing the subjectivity of space

4.2. Home in the Traditional *Mahalla*

The home is considered as an intimate institution and spatial organisation in which social, cultural, emotional and spiritual investments have been performed, employed and practised (Porteous, 1977, p. 61). It's not just an environmental or physical production, where a set of specific factors determines its concept, but as a result of a variety of social and cultural variables that, one way or another, leads to a certain order of social spaces within the framework of the house (Rapoport, 1969, p. 46). Rapoport has classified these factors as primary forces, while other determinants, no matter what, as secondary or modifying principles. In this sense, home is referred to as a prime reflector of specific culture and society. It reveals a lot about the social and cultural habits, customs and rituals of the individual and the family (Khattab, 2005, p. 2).

The importance of the idea of home is in its role in the completion of social interactions, daily practices, rituals and cultural properties, and how these factors can be achieved to maintain specific personal and collective identity. The strong influence of individual's practices and experiences, and social interactions underlying the organisation of social spaces presents the house as an informed socio-cultural product (Abdelmonem, 2015, p. 60). These factors are architecturally embodied in a significant housing pattern that has been tested for a long period of time. Different types of houses are produced, used and developed in Iraq within the specified

historical period. It is necessary to refer to or identify these patterns through the analytical description of the many examples in order to indicate the reasons beyond the selection of the introverted pattern. This type, according to many scholarly studies, identifies the core in which various socio-cultural factors have been achieved and practised. Thoroughly analytical description of the spatial arrangement and sequential order of different social domains will be discussed to give an entire image of the nature of home, socially and culturally. It will provide the key features and basic aspects in determining the shape of the house, including, rather than environmental attributes, social aspects and cultural values in addition to economic criteria. According to the multiple viewpoints of many scholars, the courtyard house has been presented as a complex organisation that has achieved historically worked atmosphere and still works, in a rationally constructive manner. It manipulates and deals with many architectural elements to achieve a basic level of environmental sustainability (Scudo, 1988, p. 82). On the other hand, many types of research and studies have been made to introduce the physical features of the house as essential requirements for sustainability (Abdelmonem, 2011a, p. 6). Socio-cultural aspects play an important role in contemporary approaches to sustainable living environments. Therefore, most of the focus here is on residents' social aspects, cultural values, rituals and daily practices and experiences in the very human institution, represented in the home.

4.2.1. The Idea of Home

Despite the ambiguity of the concept of home, it retains a variety of meanings in different contexts. Its inclusive meaning detects the physical factors of space, place or the environment. It reflects certain social properties of a specific social group. Many scholars have described home as a complicated organisation controlled by culture (Abdelmonem, 2015; Al-Naim, 2006; Rapoport, 1969). Many have defined it as just a physical shelter created for a complex set of purposes while others have revealed its latent cultural, social and spiritual meanings. This conceptual transformation is almost, from the beginning, 'functional' more than physical.

Rapoport (1969, p. 61) argues that home is a social institution and a cultural phenomenon. Its spatial arrangement refers to the cultural context in which the house reveals *social unit of space*. Charlotte Perkins Gilman (1903) defines home as a human institution in which a variety of human values, factors and notions, such as peace and quiet, comfort, health, safety, security and personal expression can be indicated and employed. In this definition, Gilman has approved inextricably links between social and spatial dimensions of the house (Saunders and Williams, 1988, p. 82). Lawrence (1987, pp. 154-155) introduces home as a complex that defines and is defined by cultural factors, social values as well as physical properties. It is the unit that revealing different socio-cultural variables and conventions. Jim Kemeny (1992) presents home as a representation for the flexibility of experiences and social practices that can change with the factor of time and social, cultural and economic developments (Abdelmonem, 2012, p. 38). From this point of view, time plays a key parameter for the type of social and cultural practices, and thus the spatial configuration of the house. Home is not only a shared place, with other people under the

name 'family' but the centre for various social activities with friends and relatives. Time factor plays an essential role in shaping the daily life of the house. This notion is in contrast to the concept of the social house where the place-being concept of home characterises people-home relationship (Sixsmith, 1986, pp. 287-291). Home, according to Smith (2006), is more than a house or any structural form for absorbing the physical needs and requirements of the family. In line with this thought, Mary Douglas (1991, p. 289) asserts that:

".....home is located in space, but it is not necessarily a fixed space. It does not need bricks and mortar. It can be a wagon, a caravan, a boat, or a tent. It need not be a large space, but a space there must be. Having shelter is not having a home, nor is having a house, nor is home the same as household".

Douglas has attempted to lead our attention to the latent aspects and intangible values of the idea of home which are outside the scope or extent of the physical properties. In understanding the concept of home, Dovey (1985) formulates three topics to identify the nature of home and its different dimensions. These topics include home as *order, identity, and connectedness*. The first approach, which is the main topic of this discussion, encompasses spatial, temporal and socio-cultural orders influenced by people's values, social interactions, rituals and everyday practices and experiences. On the other hand, Peter Saunders and Peter Williams (1988, pp. 82-83) present home as a place invested with a special social meaning, where certain kinds of social interactions and activities are composed, accomplished and contextualised. Accordingly, home is a socio-spatial institution that cannot be reduced to the level of the social component of the household or the physical properties of the house. It expresses the most active and reproduced form of fusion of the two. It is the simplest of *modern socio-spatial systems*. It (in terms of both social and spatial organisation) is indivisible functionally. MG. Abdelmonem (2010, pp. 72) introduces home as a set of spatial and physical settings that embrace social, cultural and psychological demands of the individual or small social group. The latter definition includes a set of contradictory concepts and issues, such as 'indoor-outdoor', 'private-public', 'closed-open' and so on within the physical and spatial boundaries of the house. Home, therefore, is not just a structure that was designed for specific demands or desires, but its form and spatial organisation are influenced and reflected by the cultural milieu of the surrounding context to which it belongs. Accordingly, socio-cultural aspects and individuals' everyday practices need primary stress and consideration in the articulation of the idea of home (Douglas, 1991, p. 289). Based on above-mentioned definitions and research main aim, the concept of home can be proposed as *a set of social, cultural, behavioural, emotional and spiritual needs and rituals that are embodied and reflected by a set of physical and spatial properties*.

There is also a clear distinction between home and house in Arabic culture. House, as (*bayt*), refers to the built environment that can be any physical shelter, while home, as (*maskan*), relates to people who live in and detect the meaning of the house. This distinction is presented clearly in verse (16:80) in the holy Qur'an: "*it is Allah who made your habitations (boyoutikom) homes (sakana) of rest and quiet....*" This viewpoint stands in contrast to the views of many scholars who

look at home as *bayt*, while house as *maskan*, (traditionally '*dar*'). The latter refers to the physical features of the space, or the place that can be discussed and indicated by the material or tangible factors. *Dar* is another expression reflects the region or area that is surrounded by physical configuration (Hakim, 1986, p. 95). It indicates dominantly the concept of the courtyard house in the Middle East, including Iraq (Abdelmonem, 2011a, pp. 1-2). The term '*al-bayt*', traditionally, refers to the place, and associates with the people who live in for a long period of time. It is largely used in Iraqi culture, everyday discussions and our narratives, such as '*bayt al-Chalaby*', '*bayt Kubbah*', '*bayt Merjan*' and so on. According to Bianca (2000, pp. 73-74), housing philosophy has become clear in the three definitions of a house in Arab culture, as '*iskan*', '*harim*' and '*dar*'. The first is derived from the root (s-k-n), which means dwelling or housing. It raises the ideal of a peaceful environment protected from any irrelevant or impolite visual intrusion. The concept of *harim* distinguishes the concept of the sanctity of the private sphere where the social sphere of the family defines the internal realm of the house. It signifies the female status in the family, in addition to the corresponding physical and spatial realm of the house. Strong aspects of the concept of identity, visualised by reference to the architectural container and involved socio-cultural contents, are clearly expressed by the words *dar* or *bayt*. The latter concepts refer to the idea of home in the sense of physical characteristics and basic social unit or clan. The linguistic definition of the term '*dar*' relates to the idea of encirclement and reflects the notion of the incubated and comprehensive area or community – any space or social component that presenting the idea of the centre in itself, such as '*dar al-Islam*' referring to the Muslim community. In the urban context, *dar* means family's well-defined property and structural component *identified with the inviolable 'body' of the family group* (Bianca, 2000, pp. 72-73).

4.2.2. Home, House and Household

It is necessary here to distinguish between the meaning of contemporary terminologies of domestic architecture including home, house and household. Home is referred to the concept of the place that is restricted and confined to the boundaries of the house, in which certain social and cultural identities and meanings are formed. The house, on the other hand, relates to the physical and economic aspects of space; while the household concerns the economic situation of the social unit occupying the house (Kemeny, 1992, p. 9). Household, rather than the family, represents the essence of the domestic unit in the contemporary societies. Home introduces spatial settings, in which the basic unit of social structure - household - is settled and constituted. It is more than just the household but also includes the physical unit that spatially located (Saunders and Williams, 1988, pp. 91-92). In this regard, Home represents the most inclusive term, which can accommodate the mutual relationship between the house and the household, as well as socio-cultural values, daily life, practices and rituals.

Saunders and Williams' approach is a good example of the application of the over-socialised conception of housing. In this concept, the prominence of housing is reduced by the incorporation of the house in the relationship between the household and the home to the extent that the house

almost completely loses its significance. Instead, attention is focused on the house to the point that it becomes just a yard to play and practice of interaction, whether within the household or between family members and the outside world. In this respect, home is strongly influenced, even formed, through the socio-spatial relationship between the household and the house. It cannot be understood except as a product of the social organisation of the household in its relation with the dwelling, as the spatial reflection of this organisation, the limitations it places on, and the possibilities it offers for the completion of residents' mutual activities and relationships. Neglect of this relationship and its categories will necessarily impoverish any understanding or perception for the home (Kemeny, 1992, p. 158). Building on Giddens's concept of the locale, home, in essence, represents both the spatial and social component of interaction simultaneously and inseparably (Saunders and Williams, 1988, p. 82).

4.2.3. Residential Patterns in the Traditional *Mahalla*

Private and clusters of houses are essential components of the traditional urban fabric, not only because of their dominant quantity but also because of the attitude of society's cultural principles towards civic formal institutions and the relatively low emphasis on monumental public buildings. The architecture of the mahalla shows a wide range of local and regional varieties, which may present, from a stylistic point of view, a group of residential patterns distinct from each other. Due to the limited life span of the domestic architecture in Iraq, the termite plague along with the periodic inundations of the Tigris River, it is hard to find houses return to more than 100-150 years. Yet, it can be clearly argued that traditional principles, represented in socio-cultural aspects and psychological behaviours of Iraqi society, date back to much further. Archaeological investigation and referral to preserved places of historic periods that display identical styles can provide hard evidence of this reality (Bianca, 2000, p. 80).

Housing typology in Iraq can be generally exemplified in three fundamental types including the traditional house with central courtyard (*hosh* or *finā*); houses without courtyards, where the main family hall reflects the multi-purpose space for this type; and houses without external courtyards/gardens in contemporary examples (Salama, 2003, pp. 1-2). Several housing thinkers and scholars have classified them into two main types; '*introverted*' houses (*inside-out* houses as Rapoport (2007) called them), and '*extroverted*' houses which predominantly cover contemporary housing prototypes, where internal spaces are directed towards the outside (Figure 4.9). Despite the many analytical studies and intellectual disciplines dealt with the former prototype, the courtyard house remains a source of creativity and inspiration in detecting the characteristics of contemporary and future architectural models. This reflects the intellectual richness of this type of domestic buildings historically in different aspects, including social, cultural, spatial and religious principles in addition to environmental advantages (Kiet, 2010, pp. 38-39). The courtyard house is the favoured typology and the dominant component in the traditional urban fabric in Iraq. Its type, as introverted spatial composition, reacts ideally or is the perfect response to Islamic socio-cultural order, rules, beliefs and requirements. It achieves moreover valuable environmental and

climatic advantages (Bianca, 2000, pp. 73-74). This particular type involves several physical components with reference to its structural details, spatial arrangements and overall visual and environmental significance. It represents the building artefact that produced by the people, embodied their decisions and wishes, and hence illustrated their way of handling their daily lives. It manifests clearly the two-folded concept in the sense that it differentiates significantly between many contradictory perceptions, such as 'men/women', 'here/there', 'front/back', 'sacred/profane', 'public/private', and 'habitable/non-habitable' and more others, which cover theoretical concentrations of most contemporary scholars and thinkers (Salama, 2003, p. 1). It displays a human institution embodying an integrated system of intellectual, social, cultural, emotional and environmental properties. The courtyard house with all its components and aspects presents an ideal example for sustainable living environments, as will be discussed later. It can be the most beneficial source, from which socio-cultural aspects can be learned, extracted and utilised for achieving a more sustainable development in Iraqi contexts.



Figure 4.9: Housing Typologies in Iraq: (Left) Dar Babil in Al-Hilla-Iraq, showing the introverted pattern 'the courtyard house', (Right) Houses behind Haifa Street Development in Baghdad-Iraq, revealing the extroverted type

In addition to all previous, it is necessary to refer to the irrational tendency that trying to ignore and marginalise this rich heritage in all its cultural, social and intellectual aspects in an attempt to obscure its importance in creating a cultural identity (Soud *et al.*, 2010, p. 75; Salama, 2003, pp. 1-2). The research, therefore, will focus on highlighting the real concept of this complex and show its underlying characteristics.

4.2.4. The Architecture of the Traditional Courtyard House

In order to develop and extrapolate the social and cultural aspects of a traditional home in Iraq, it is important to show an analytical description of the house spatially and functionally. This study will be useful in the investigation and allocation of different spaces, meanings, functions and relationships with respect to their own family members. It will constitute a clear vision of the different values produced and formed this pattern.

Iraqi-style courtyard home depends on the idea of social essence reflecting the concept of the central core of the whole urban fabric (Figure 4.10). It embodies the human concept of this compound in all its variables including environmental, social and cultural as well as spiritual and emotional aspects. Rest, peace, quiet, comfort, health and personal expressions can this complex offer through intimate and interconnected relationships between social and spatial factors. The courtyard house shows the social and cultural entire investment of the place, where a system of complex activities and interactions are composed and accomplished in (Mallett, 2004, p. 69). It emphasises the concept of home (*maskan*) as a virtually independent unit from the influence of any civic or religious institution, and relies entirely on the control of the family head '*the father*', who acts as the '*imam*', i.e. the main responsible religious leader, for his domestic community, represented in the family, inside this intimate and human complex (Bianca, 2000, p. 36). Despite the abstract physical meanings and implications of these terms, but they reflect a lot of social, cultural and moral values that are at the heart of the real composition of the family and society.



Figure 4.10: Views of the courtyard from the first level showing the elevated colonnade balcony '*Tarma*' in Al-Naqib house in Kadhimiya

Spatially speaking, the courtyard house shows great concern for the idea of a quadrangle form in the regular layout of the courtyard (*hosh* or *fin'a*), in the centre of the residential unit, surrounded by a variety of spaces distributed in almost two levels. Privacy and its methods of completion, through the spatial organization of different activities, embody the primary consideration in the design and architecture of the house. Bent form of the entrance space, especially in large houses, enhances, in itself, family's privacy, and therefore constitutes a specific importance spatially, socially and culturally. This space is broken out into a square or octagonal domed space called '*dolan*'. Internal-doors of these spaces are sometimes closed or equipped by a curtain for the purpose of privacy and not to allow or avoid any visual intrusion or direct connection between public and private spheres. Therefore, doors are arranged in a way so that none of the family life inside will be visible from the public space outside (Warren and Fethi, 1982, p. 50).

In small houses, the courtyard has two sets of rooms on both sides, often facing the north and east. On the contrary, large houses include, sometimes, two courts; one of them is for men and guests, (*diwankhana*); while the other is for women, their guests and servants, (*harem*). These divisions have sometimes their own entrances in order to achieve a high level of gender segregation. They also can be beneficial in many social occasions and practices where women, for example, can use their part freely and without any interference from the men on the other part. Most functional and service rooms, guest spaces and reception rooms are occasionally in shaded recesses and are used for open-air sitting and informal reception (*iwan*) on the ground level. Main rooms and mezzanines are laid behind a paved balcony (*tarma*), around almost the courtyard, emphasised by high elaborated balustrades and timber colonnades. This detail is predominantly used on the first floor overlooking the courtyard (Warren and Fathi, 1982, pp. 100-102) (Figures 4.11, 4.12). Iranian palaces and pavilions of the Safawid period, or tracing back to the Achaemenid's times, have a significant influence on the architecture of the elevated colonnade of the *tarma* and the recessed bay of *talar*, with its two elaborate columns, in the Iraqi courtyard model. The colonnade *tarma* runs around the courtyard, on one or several sides, and combines often with the *iwan-like* recesses of the *talar*. This concept gives access to lateral bays and the closed female reception room, called '*Ursi*' (Bianca, 2000, p. 74; Warren and Fethi, 1982, pp. 45-49; Nour, 1979, pp. 356-357). The height of the representative upper floor, which is sometimes five metres, allows the inclusion of split levels, especially in the corners on both sides of the *ursi* or the *talar*. This detail creates low mezzanine rooms, called '*kabishkans*', used by the female in specific social occasions and when the ground floor, in single courtyard houses, is occupied by males and their visitors. *Kabishkan* contains many distinct windows through which women can

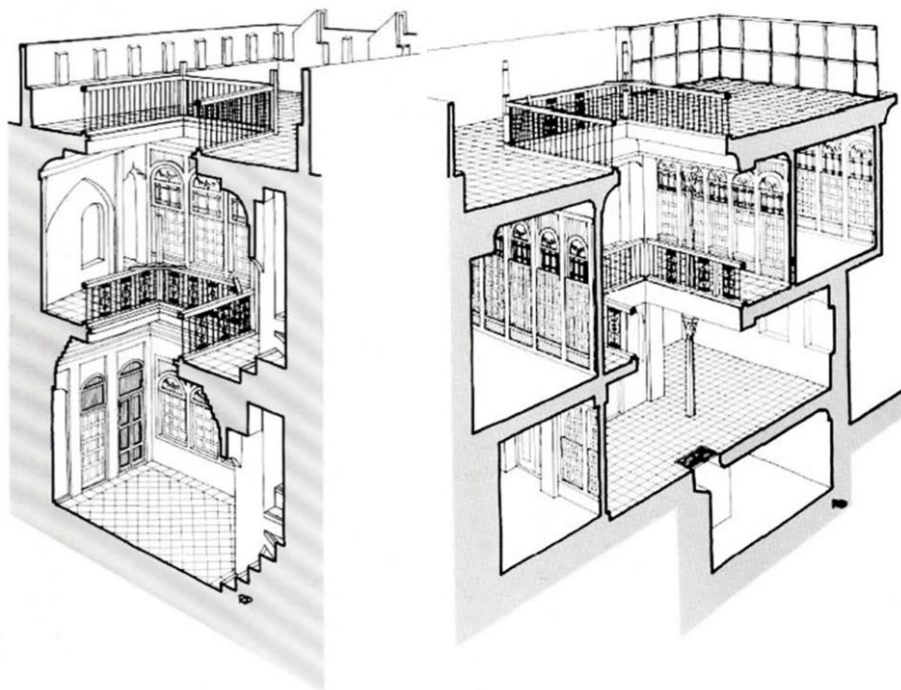


Figure 4.11: Typical sections of the traditional Baghdadi courtyard house in Iraq
(Source: Warren and Fethi, 1982, p. 38)

look into the *ursi* and *tarma*, just beneath, and have an impressive sight towards the courtyard level across the open colonnade. This nature achieves an indirect social and visual interaction with full respect for the principle of privacy and sanctity in Islamic culture. Rooms, which have an interface to external public spaces, tend to rush toward the open sphere of the alley. The irregular triangular corbels of the cantilevers constitute typical dented elevations. These architectural components are called '*shanashil*' and have an important role in the traditional home socially and culturally as well as environmental interests (Bianca, 2000, p. 74; Warren and Fethi, 1982, p. 39).



Figure 4.12: (Left): Detail from the courtyard shows the '*Ursi*'; (Right): The *Kabishkan* in courtyard houses.

As long as roofs of these houses could be used by families as open sleeping areas, during nearly half a year, no one could look at his neighbour or in his courtyard out of respect for the privacy of neighbours and the embodiment of a concrete moral system. Moreover, the height of houses should not be more than two stories above the ground, including the mezzanine level. The traditional house includes an underground level as cellars, known as '*sirdabs*', and semi-basements, known as '*nims*'. The void of the high living room at the basement level, '*nim*', occupies a large part of the ground floor, and is used precisely during the hot summer time. The fina'a (courtyard) captures the concept of the centrality of where it stands as a coordinator of and focal point for the movement of the whole family. It gives family members the opportunity to participate in daily life, experiences and practices that take place largely in the courtyard (Nour, 1979, pp. 363-364; Warren and Fethi, 1982, pp. 39-40).

4.2.6. Social and Cultural Attributes of the Home

Study of the spatial organisation has resulted in a comprehensive and intensive clarification of the concept of home. According to Shelley Mallett (2004), it functions as a repository of complex, interrelated and, at times, contradictory socio-cultural ideas about people's relations with one another, especially within the family, and with the places, spaces and things. It can be a dwelling or place of living for interaction between people, on the one hand, and places and things on the other hand. It represents, according to Gaston Bachelard (1969), '*our first universe*' in all its social and cultural attributes (Mallett, 2004, p. 84). Accordingly, the composition of home stems from two main streams based respectively on social construction and cultural diversity.

Common beliefs, held about the nature of the Iraqi family and its cultural and social role, led to specific positions belong, in essence, to the function of social activities and initial behavioural patterns (Salama, 2003, p. 2). Rapoport (2007, pp. 58-65) exemplifies many detailed factors including privacy, as each house principally is a private domain, activity systems or subsystems of settings, its centrality in providing access to all spaces, and its ability to provide more efficient space and thus reduce the plot of the settlement. Accordingly, identity, social relations, status and the like, have become increasingly more flexible, diverse, dynamic and heterogeneous, affecting respectively on the meaning and importance of the social life of the individual and the group. Spatial regulation of the house, as a form of expression, proposes and identifies required social rituals that embody, in its nature, the form and style of daily practices, experiences and therefore order (Abdelmonem, 2015, pp. 77-78). In relation to this concept, a set of values can be inferred enhancing scholars' belief that the critical factors in the formation of domestic settings, implicitly and explicitly, are socio-cultural and socio-religious factors, rituals and beliefs as well as environmental and climatic efficiency. These attributes pose traditional house as an integrated and comprehensive system of social, cultural, behavioural and spatial settings (Salama, 2003, pp. 1-2; Warren and Fethi, 1982, p. 101). Therefore, there is no specific form or model of the house can be agreed in any society as long as it is linked to a particular cultural context. Package of contradictory and highly interconnected social, cultural and spatial factors derived from various social systems and contexts has submitted strange standards of social reality in their formulation of open style in the contemporary home. Key components of this form and, in turn, contemporary neighbourhood, are isolated and self-oriented residential units, as a result of diverse cultural backgrounds, social networks, rituals and practices. Consequently, the idea of home can only be exercised within the physical limits of the house, and barely affected by the social values of society (Abdelmonem, 2015, p. 87).

For people in most traditional societies, the concept of home has been displayed as *an extension of the human body*, an external layer of attire, *not altogether unlike that of other peoples*, *but capable of* pleasing an additional measure of exertion, of consideration, of trimming and of *self-expression* that gives its inhabitants a chance to possess it (Khan and Moore, 1990, p. 168). This cultural mentality, which is the embodiment of a mixture of social, moral and religious values and obligations, produces the introverted form that can only be envisioned from the inside

out (Rapoport, 2007, pp. 58-59). It stresses coherent and interrelated spatial settings that connect indoor spaces with outdoor public realms, such as local alleys in the traditional *mahalla*. Moreover, it introduces the *mahalla* as the ultimate home that can extend beyond the physical borders of the house, and can embrace the whole society. The conclusion is that all these attributes and aspects, including environmental and climatic factors, are the result of the influence of social norms and culture or activity systems, as an expression of culture (Salama, 2003, p. 2). Whatever the source of inspiration or the model is, the house becomes a statement of the individual, the family statement - and often women's statement. It leads to a number of meaningful factors and properties that create the portrait of the individual, the family and, thus, society as a whole (Khan and Moore, 1990, pp. 168-169).

4.2.7. The Private Realm of the Courtyard House

Social privacy displays a primary consideration in the spatial arrangement of the introverted courtyard house in Iraq. Each residential unit embodies the private domain in different levels or degrees according to the nature of privacy, social groups and the type of mechanisms used. As mentioned previously, the private domain relates to and is associated, in some way, with the public sphere. The form of this relation and thus in-between transitional realms has a tendency to vary more than the residential unit or the settlement, and change over time (Rapoport, 2007, p. 58). To achieve privacy and clarify private/public domains, many spatial arrangements and architectural boundaries will have to be produced (Madanipour, 2003, pp. 125-126). The spatial arrangement of the traditional house reflects and embodies public/private realms and intermediate transitional worlds, not in relation to the residential unit itself but the whole fabric. Controlled entrances, doorways and high, solid and blank exterior walls stand as separated lines, features and boundaries between public realms and private spheres with respect to the house. They show the semi-private realm of the *mahalla* and the semi-public domain of the house which are closely associated with and related to the space of the entrance. This space, through the bent form of movement towards the semi-private realm of the courtyard (*hosh* or *fin'a*), as described previously, maximises the degree of privacy and stops any direct visual contact with the outside. Family spaces on the first-floor display and enhance the private domain, and mostly constitute women's sector or harem section (Bianca, 2000, p. 38; Warren and Fethi, 1982, pp. 100-102). Private and semi-private spaces form particularly the inner core of the traditional house especially in the *harem* zone. Men's domains, where guests are welcomed and public affairs can be conducted, are associated with the semi-public realm of the house, and in a certain and direct spatial relationship with the semi-public context of the entrance (Madanipour, 2003, p. 125).

Public-private relations inside the courtyard house are largely organised in accordance with the lines of family members, familiar strangers; such as guests, and, more specifically, male-female interactions (Madanipour, 2003, p. 134). Many social, behavioural and physical treatments with regard to privacy, gender segregation and direct visual communications between male and female and/or between females and visitors have been achieved in an intelligent manner. Entire

completion of these factors gives the impression of a deep understanding of the nature of the social, intellectual, cultural and religious aspects of the community. Pattern and degree of privacy rely heavily on the level of social domain, which, according to Abdelmonem (2011b, p. 1002), is explained and manifested in the type of relationship and interaction within the social space during a specified period of time. This will take the study towards an important approach to the changeable factors of the nature of social spaces inside the house and, on certain occasions, between them and the public outside. This attitude embodies the concept or explains the nature of interconnectedness between the private and public spheres in the traditional courtyard homes.

4.2.8. The Concept of Fluidity and Social Interconnectedness

The concept of the two-folded notions of social spaces, in terms of the private/public, male/female and inside/outside issues, depends, as we mentioned earlier, on the type of social relations and interactions taking place in a certain area during different periods of time. Physical, mental or cognitive-based boundaries clarify and identify the configuration of these realms and determine their extension beyond certain layouts. Socio-spatial flexibility defines and promotes the dynamic concept of social space, its determined limits and nature the activity. This kind of fluidity is largely dependent on the nature and type of social and cultural interactions and system activities in a given context. On a scale of home and in certain social practices and specific times, the private realm can accommodate various actions and activities, whose limitations can be changed constantly. However, the public nature of the alley (*agd*), within the small clustering unit, can be turned over into private at certain times of the day and, therefore, can be used freely by the female as one of the house's private spaces. Both domains are employed to define human activities and daily situations in extended contexts. In such situations and interactions, These worlds become spatially flexible, and unspecified strictly by the physical boundaries of the dwelling, in the sense that the private may be opened to the public while the latter, in some cases, appeared to be private (Abdelmonem, 2015, p. 80). Another transitional nature in the social spaces can be observed and practised when the family confronts the expected visits, or the non-anticipated ones, by males' friends or guests. In response to these events, the social sphere of spaces has to be suspended to polarise new members, and rooms have to be transformed into public spaces allowing temporary access to visitors from abroad. On the other hand, family life must be re-treated, re-drafted and continued in parallel without being noticed or disrupted by visitors (Bianca, 2000, pp. 78-79). This mechanism enhances the accessibility and permeability of social spaces at specific times. It confirms the actual and effective nature of both domains, and consequently affects the pattern, organisation and division of social spaces (Abdelmonem, 2011b, p. 1000).

One of the key features mentioned by Rapoport (2007) with respect to the courtyard house is that the courtyard itself provides or shows a specific system of activities within the social organisation of the residential unit. These activities vary to a large extent in connection with the time factor in a particular context. Mutual meaning-space-time-communication relationship affects

greatly this mechanism and, correspondingly, the nature of the social sphere. The semi-public or semi-private nature of different activities, at specified intervals, can be changed to be used as clear public or private realms by changing the spatial arrangement of their fixed, semi-fixed and non-fixed components within the same context (Rapoport, 2007, pp. 58-59). It reveals the virtual and phenomenal relationship between things and things, things and people, and people and people in the same built environment that can be observed and exercised clearly within the scope of the traditional *mahalla*.

Based on above-mentioned thoughts, the concept of flexibility or fluidity can be practised in most private and public realms of the house or nearby contexts achieving and promoting the extended nature or continuity of social spaces. It strengthens social cohesion among individuals in their daily lives within the space of the alley, and main thoroughfares of the *mahalla*. This was demonstrated in all social and cultural as well as physical levels of traditional contexts (Boudiaf, 2010, p. 36). Spatial and social flexibility can be noticed in different situations and a variety of activity systems in the daily life of Iraqi society, as is the case in the wedding festivities, sorrow ceremonies or others. It has a prominent role in enhancing social relationships and maintaining social and moral cohesion among the various members of the Iraqi community.

4.2.9. The Concept of Centrality

Centrality and multi-functionality of space in the traditional house represent the essence of the concept of space and plays an important role in the formative space for different activities (Morris, 1995, p. 11). This concept is a reflection of the centrality of the basic social, cultural and religious core, in which the mosque represents and symbolises the central and most powerful authority over all other civic institutions. Centrality is applied in residential units and is embodied in every detail and corner of the courtyard or the family sphere, as the socio-cultural core of the house in its direct contact with other facilities. Different social activities and realms are arranged around the courtyard in a way highlighting its importance socially and culturally, and his role as a theatre to perform everyday practices (Figure 4.13) (Bianca, 2000, pp. 73-74; Warren and Fethi, 1982, p. 100). Family members, in their daily practices, have a direct contact with each other and with the external environment through the uncovered yard. It helps to achieve the maximum degree of movement and activity inside the house in addition to its role in ethnic and religious conditions. It embodies the source of the family's life, safety, security and privacy, and expresses its status, beliefs and socio-cultural values. It reflects, as well, the status and centrality of the family head, as the second Lord, for all family members (Soud *et al.*, 2010, p. 52). In other words, this centralisation stems clearly from the '*father*' as the spiritual, social and cultural centre for the whole family. Accordingly, centrality is regarded as a socio-cultural determinant as it affects the general system of activities, and reveals the social status of the family and promotes the lifestyle, rituals and daily practices for family members. The courtyard or the multifunctional sphere, as a physical incubator to the concept of centrality, binds the individual to the place and space to form an intelligent and sustainable socio-spatial association in everyday life (Abdelmonem, 2011b, p.

1002). It achieves the concept of home as a social, cultural, emotional, intellectual and creative centre where the entire urban fabric of the *mahalla* crystallises around it. Each factor and principle of the whole *mahalla* is a clear reflection and expression of the traditional house in its aspects, values and principles. On the other hand, this notion, according to the philosophical viewpoint of many scholars, reflects the concept of 'al-Qa'aba' in Makkah, where people are directed towards the visual and spiritual centre of al-Qa'aba and the sky in Islamic culture (Ardalan and Bakhtiar, 1973, p. xii). This thought has been reflected by the concept of the courtyard as spiritual, social and cultural contextual centre that achieving, in its essence, the meaning of the Islamic religious and spiritual centre (al-Qa'aba).



Figure 4.13: The centrality in the traditional Baghdadi house. (Lefty): Al-Nawab house in Kadhimiya; (Right): Al-Naqib house in Baghdad-Iraq

In recent years and as a result of the deterioration of social ties and relations between not only members of the community or neighbourhood, but among members of the same social group, the role of the family head (the father) in relation to the followers has been restricted and abandoned (Bianca, 2000, p. 36). Social deterioration has affected the fundamental meaning and concept of centrality which, in turn, influenced the meaning of the courtyard as the socio-cultural core and the formative mechanism of the residential unit.

Synthesis: Reconstructed the Idea of Home and *Mahalla*

The central theme for the first part of this chapter is to understand the concept of the traditional *mahalla*, its existing organisational pattern and socio-spatial dimensions. The *mahalla* represents a homogeneous part and integrated complex in all its social, cultural, economic and political factors reflecting thus specific social characteristics of its inhabitants. This intertwined complex

shows how the individual, in his social and cultural interactions, daily practices and experiences, interacts with others and the surrounding environment for the promotion of the concepts of lifestyle, safety, culture and welfare of the people. Spatial morphology of the *mahalla* reflects the internal social, cultural, physical and spatial organisation of the home. It embodies the notion of inclusiveness between the singular home and the entire built environment. It captures, at the same time, the idea of self-reliance in a specific manner forming a holistic composite of social and cultural values. It is maintained internally and without any external interference in its basic services and facilities. It achieves a type of social, cultural, spiritual and economic diversity within an integrated unity of spatial and physical properties. This unity in diversity is reflected by the compact form of the built environment in Iraqi traditional contexts and most Arab cities.

The discussion has provided some conceptual details regarding the intertwined relationship between private and public spheres and the transitional stages in-between. The interaction or the overlap between private and public domains is crucially integrated producing an organised public context in terms of the pursuing hierarchy of transitional spaces from the public to the private. They serve, at the same time, as interconnected links between opposing but interdependent domains. In such context, women can circulate in the various social spheres of the *mahalla* in a controlled and organised mechanism socially, culturally and physically. This mechanism is imposed by a set of values, customs and traditions based, in their sources, on Islamic culture, everyday social practices, inherited rituals, norms, conventions and past experiences. In this meaning, the *mahalla* represents an intermediate context between the home and the whole built environment. It reflects the idea of home in its large scale. Concepts of privacy and gender segregation are largely achieved on the scale of the home, the *mahalla*, and the whole urban fabric, as opposed to the unacceptable notions of openness and visual accessibility of contemporary built and home environments.

The main account of the second part passes through the main aim of the study by analysing the concept of home, as spatial and physical setting, with regard to the traditional *mahalla*. People's socio-cultural values, everyday practices and experiences play a key role in the conception and central meaning of the architecture of a traditional house. This notion can be detected by understanding the structural reality of the reciprocal relationship between different functions, activities, social interactions and social spaces within the physical boundaries of the house. All these factors are included in and reflected by the idea of home and its architecture that embodied the main concept of the complex: space-time. Home is a reflector of many social factors and cultural aspects of the surrounding context to which it belongs. The traditional model of the house reflects these factors and principles for different periods of time, which in turn reinforced the importance of having this pattern. Saunders and Williams (1988, p. 91) assert, with respect to this thought, that the house plays an important part in society, and is considered as a reproduction of its basic socio-cultural forms. Home and *mahalla* in Iraqi traditional contexts are integrated with each other socially, culturally and physically, in an adaptable mode achieves a kind of social, cultural and spatial continuity and fluidity or flexibility in the nature of social spaces

inside and outside the home. Space-activity-time interconnected relationship determines the pattern, ability and capacity of flexibility between the spaces.

Despite the nature of privacy and gender segregation and mechanisms used to achieve them which differ from context to other, each dwelling is in itself a private domain in its relation with the public. The form of such links and, hence, the nature of transitional spaces or intermediate domains are also different and tend to vary and change over time. The presence of the private domain, at least in its personal level, within the limits of public life for each context affects the nature and order of social spaces and thus protects their socio-spatial settings. This complex and the intertwined relationship between these conflicting domains are achieved in an integrated, spontaneous and organic form embodied in the architecture of the traditional house. They are manifested in its different prototypes, introverted and extroverted, and the spatial organisation of the residential district (*mahalla*) in Iraqi traditional environments. The introverted prototype forms the main model in these contexts. It provides well-protected internal spaces within the structural composition of the home socially and culturally. Private and sacred values of each space are protected, when and where needed, through its spatial re-organisational characters and latent rules, traditions and norms of each community. The architecture of the house; characterised by privacy, security, safety along with a sense of community, needs to be sustained and promoted socially, culturally and physically, through the utilisation of its values and components in our approach to a more sustainable living environment.

The next chapter will deal with the research methodology that will be adopted in investigating and analysing socio-cultural values, everyday life, rituals, practices and experiences underlying the formation of the traditional home and *mahalla*. It will tackle the underlying factors behind the choice of research methodology and key methods in collecting information and data, and generating reliable findings and conclusions.

CHAPTER V

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Introduction

Despite the importance of research in all academic activities, it does not exhibit specific definition, due to its association with different meanings and concepts with reference to the academic field and views of researchers. Amaratunga *et al.* (2002) summarise these definitions in the process of enquiry and investigation, systematic process and, finally, a method for increase our knowledge with respect to the relevant region under consideration (Amaratunga, 2002, p. 17). According to Paul D. Leedy (2009), research is the way in which we tackle knotty issues in our endeavor to push back the outskirts of human lack of awareness. Research is eventually a mindset. It is a method for taking a gander at gathered truths so that an accumulation of information addresses the psyche of the analyst (Boudiaf, 2010, pp. 90-91),

John W. Creswell (2003, p. 3) suggests three categories or frameworks for researcher's investigations. They include concepts and philosophical assumptions about what constructs knowledge claims; including narrative, postpositive, socially constructed, advocacy/participatory and pragmatic; general actions and processes called strategies of inquiry, and, finally, detailed actions and procedures of data collections, analysis, and writing called methods. Nature of the research - dealing with social, cultural, psychological and behavioural aspects of the house, analysing different research competences or disciplines, and their design and spatial properties - requires historical and theoretical studies in the architecture of home in traditional contexts. These variables refer to social processes and actions concerning the spatial development of home (Lawrence, 1987, p. 1). In this respect, the research requires developing a clear, reliable or accredited methodology to be relevant to the various aspects of the work. It needs to know the logical answers in dealing with multidirectional discipline, related to the socio-spatial interpretive phenomenon, in order to prove the existence of a clear idea of the investigation with reference research questions (Groat and Wang, 2002, pp. 136-137). It is encouraging follow-up research from the multidisciplinary perspective, in the architecture of the house, granting conceptual and theoretical notions on applied topics and studies (Lawrence, 1987, p. xvii). The second part of the study concerns the generation of theoretical concepts and interrelationships to find out how relevant and convenient they are in realising and reversing our observations of reality with the goal of constructing better results.

After identifying research main objective and questions, as long as it reflects the main line of investigation and generates theoretical or conceptual base, next step will be to investigate and clarify the appropriate ways which are going to be used to collect and analyse data, information and evidence to achieve the research relevant objectives. Construction and development of strategic choices with respect to the appropriate methods for collecting information is a significant and necessary part of the study. It introduces, according to Jennifer Mason (2002, p. 3), the logic or process to be used to answer research questions and objectives.

5.1. Research Strategy

On the basis of the nature of research question and literature review, it is apparent that this type of subjective and socially constructed study can be relevant in explanatory inquiry, which refers to multiple realities in concern with social and personal interactions and behaviours. Accordingly, the study tends to be qualitative because of its effectiveness in social studies. This method is useful in obtaining reasonable information about socio-cultural values, opinions, behaviours, principles and beliefs of particular society. It provides information regarding the "*human*" side of any subject. It relates often to contradictory aspects of human behaviours, beliefs, opinions and emotions in addition to its focus on individuals' relations with each other. Qualitative method is effective in identifying intangible factors, such as social norms, gender roles, ethnicity, and religion whose role may not be readily evident (Kramer-Kile, 2012, p. 27; Bhattacharjee, 2012, p. 113). It enables people to embrace and understand their everyday lives, and '*why things are the way they are*' or '*why people act the ways they do*' in social life. Its main concerns relate to interpretations associated with the social phenomena, and social, cultural and behavioural factors of our daily lives (Hancock, 1998, p. 2). Qualitative research provides entire perspective by identifying a set of variables and explicit and implicit principles and rules without any attempt to manipulate the situation under investigation. These aspects are crucial in the study of the home environment as long as the latter relates to non-specific or, in particular, non-measurable factors. It concerns understanding the meaning people constructed, their experiences and feelings of the world around as well as their interaction with surrounding spaces and elements (Silverman, 2006, p. 26; Mason, 2002, p. 2; Hancock, 1998, pp. 2-3). Simplest, but more functional, definition, as stated by Nkwi, Nyamonga and Ryan in 2001, is that qualitative research does not indicate ordinal values of the data (Mason, 2002, p. 3).

Several scholars and researchers in home environment depend, in their investigation, on various research strategies spanning from design and architectural methods to experimental analytical ones. The former can be noticed in the work of Linda Groat and David Wang (2002), who provided seven examples of research strategies to be used to inform the design process, related with history, including qualitative, experimental, co-relational, simulation, logical argumentation, case study and multi-method approaches. The latter combines architecture with social and cultural values as in the works of Roderic Lawrence (1987), and Amos Rapoport (1969, 1977). Rapoport relies on or employs many issues, such as '*human basic needs*', '*the family*', '*the position of women*', '*privacy*', and '*social intercourse*', under '*genre de vie*' notion, in investigating and understanding how important these factors are in home environments. Lawrence (1987, p. 28) criticises the generality in these factors and the eight questions, introduced by Rapoport as conceptual framework for the studying of the house and settlement patterns. Abundant examples of De Certeau, including his prolific work '*The Practice of Everyday Life*' (1984); and the numerous works of MG. Abdelmonem with regard to the architecture and the exercise of home in Old Cairo (2010, 2011, 2012, 2015), are essential references in the investigation of the socio-spatial dynamics of daily life over a specific period of time and specified context. The latter has

developed De Certeau's direct observations to specific contexts by linking and referring social and anthropological knowledge and records to the house, through a temporal journey in the Cairene *harah* (Abdelmonem, 2010, p. 17).

5.2. Research Inquiries

The descriptive approach of key findings, evidence and data, relating to the process of home architecture, can guide the research in an exploratory way to approach the relevant answers to the research question. With respect to this perspective, the research will rely on three basic principles that would lead to follow three specific strategies of method inquiries. Design of this study depends on the purpose of these inquiries, as long as their essence is the main source in the conduct of research, which mainly relies on the problem, experiences and data, hypothesis, expectations and ambitions, and realities (Hoepfl, 1997, p. 47; Amaratunga, 2002, p. 18). These inquiries include:

- **Firstly:** Investigation of the home environment can be clearly understood through a thoroughly analysis and study of its formation and development within a specified period. Social, cultural and physical factors are associated and integrated with each other in a mutual relationship which makes them difficult to study separately. Historical perspective is essential in showing how these diverse categories are interacted and developed over the passage of time. Lawrence (1987) stressed the importance of the historical analysis to understand how previously mentioned factors are changed and transformed. It reveals at the same time how these shifts are shown and achieved in the architecture of home and organisation of social spaces (Lawrence, 1987, pp. 29-31). Moreover, study, monitor and observe the evolution of social, cultural and behavioural factors in the community with the passage of time provide insight into the structural and developmental process of the house (Ozaslan, 1998, p. 256). This inquiry identifies the type of research analysis in dealing with or using space, place, time and contextual elements. It depends on the investigation of the historical data obtained from archival reports, documents, drawings, photographs, historical accounts and maps, as well as interviews with the elders and reliable experts in the architecture of the house in the traditional *mahalla*. These tools prove integrative or complementary approach to generate information.
- **Secondly:** Main objective of the study deals with the analysis of social and spatial values, underlying factors behind the formation of the traditional home environment. This attitude poses impressive inquiry with respect to the main objective of the study and sustainability aspects in this context. It identifies the shaping categories in the design process of the traditional home and *mahalla*. Spatial formation of the house reflects apparently the formal embodiment of interconnected and inseparable values of users' social, cultural and behavioural actions. Interpretation or perception of traditional home architecture, through mutual understanding of the relationship and interaction between spatial/physical settings and socio-cultural aspects of the individual, or a small social group, constitutes influential

methodology in this study (Rapoport, 1969/1977, Lawrence, 1987, Madanipour, 2003). In this dialectical process, time factor plays a crucial role in the reciprocal relations between space and social factors, and between spatial/physical performance and social fluidity or flexibility. Given this principle, the integral interaction between spatial/physical properties and socio-cultural factors cannot be analysed solely through simultaneous investigation, as in the case of observational and documentary fieldwork studies, especially when the fieldwork cannot be extended outside the physical boundaries of the house. Having a comprehensive methodology to investigate the architecture of the house is necessary and required for generating a unified theory (Lawrence, 1987, pp. 31-32).

- **Finally:** A look at the daily life of the community is an important way to monitor and discover how social and cultural factors, which people, themselves, are not aware of, articulate and clarify their daily patterns, attitudes and routines, and form respectively the spatial/physical properties of their environment. For the purpose of studying the mutual relations between spatial practices and everyday life dynamics within the confines of home or the context of the *mahalla* by means of which residents can re-evaluate social space (Certeau, 1984, p. xv), it is necessary to take into account the influence of cultural values. Another way of saying, every human society runs in existence on the basis of people's ideas, values, norms, beliefs and way of thinking (Inglis, 2005, p. 3). Every society in all its aspects is composed of or requires culture. To fully understand social interactions between spatial practices, physical properties and dynamics of everyday life, a researcher needs to be a part of this context. Pierre Bourdieu (1990, cited in Inglis, 2005, p. 13) reveals "*how we construct sociological understandings of people 'out there' in the 'real world', the ways in which we comprehend their mundane existences, are always bound up with both our own personal dispositions and the politics of academic life. Our class, ethnicity, gender and other forms of background can impact on how we talk about and evaluate others.*"

5.3. Methods of Collecting Data and Generating Information

Walking through the urban fabric of the *mahalla*, feeling and touching its parts, thinking about what this complex reflects and sketching its different spatial and physical components are useful tools and essential means as an initial stage to explore research areas. All that, according to Spiro K. Kostof (1991, p. 10), cannot inform us or reveal much about what really happened. Despite the impossibility of direct access, observation and inspection, as appropriate, to the past, it left concurrently different interpretive resources of information, such as the collection of evidence, the narrative and evaluation. These resources can be employed by the present and can be relied upon, even if these evidence are in decay or cannot tell us or reflect, in one way or another, the real situation for a specified period (Groat and Wang, 2002, p. 151).

Scholars in qualitative research have discussed and described several approaches for the purpose of gathering useful and meaningful information, which are interrelated and have

overlapping properties. Research depends on many of them in collecting data and information. The **phenomenological** approach focuses mainly on individuals' practices and experiences, social values, beliefs and perceptions. Open-ended questions, in-depth interviews and observations are impressive methods in collecting phenomenological information (Mason, 2002, pp. 10-11). The **ethnographical** approach represents an important method of collecting data in most complicated research where social, cultural, spatial and physical aspects of the contextual environment are involved. With respect to its naturalistic manner and emphasis on understanding the local perspective and meaning of the phenomenon, personal monitoring of and participating in the traditional context can produce reliable perspective. Participants' observation is regarded as effective part of the ethnographic strategy in gathering information (Mason, 2002, pp. 11-12), and can accommodate all types of data collection methods. **Case study** method is a research strategy for the purpose of investigating the dynamics referring to the particular situation of the phenomenon, being analysed. This strategy is necessary when there is no clarity in the phenomenon or the subject of analysis, especially when regarding the nature of the relationship between socio-cultural values and surrounding spatial/physical contexts (Hancock, 1998, pp. 9 - 10). It tests the particular phenomenon to a range of experiences in the context of real life, and demonstrates, moreover, the central strategy to focus on the study of processes that occur in virtual contexts (Mason, 2002, p. 14). Case study method is necessary for generating hypotheses, building proposals and theories in built environmental studies (Amaratunga, 2002, pp. 25-26). This method is suitable due to its significance for studies where participants' practices and experiences, as well as their contextual interactions, are decisive, especially in understanding the 'Why' and 'How' factors for the phenomenon. It is well-suited for multi-disciplinary studies, which involve many participants and touch multiple sequences of mutual relations (Bhattacharjee, 2012, pp. 94-95). Due to the interpretive nature of case study method, it generates an inductive approach in which data can be collected from different contexts, analysed and synthesised for the emergence of new concepts with the aim of constructing new patterns or developing existing ones. **Narrative analysis** method refers to historical accounts that display a sequence of social, cultural and historical values of a specific context or phenomenon. These accounts can be generated through in-depth interviews and observation of focus groups or participants. They can be listed in written records including letters, newspapers, internet and many other resources. Discussing, analysing and categorising narratives can open up more opportunities to reach a better understanding of the phenomenon (Mason, 2002, p. 16).

Due to the raw nature of qualitative data collection, findings cannot be analysed statistically more often, for they derive their data from individuals or focus groups interviews and observation. At the same time, wide survey will not give different results as long as the study relates to the socio-cultural aspects of traditional society and the daily lives of its representatives who share the same principles and beliefs and, thus, rely on similar functional processors and spatial settings. Data in such strategies tend to be time-consuming to collect (Hancock, 1998, p. 9). Qualitative data and information can be described as a prolific source of descriptions, explanations and well-grounded processes in identifiable traditional contexts. With this method, a chronological flow of

information can be preserved in order to discover the reasons behind existing architectural decisions, the events that led to such consequences, and finally to extract useful clarifications and explanations (Amaratunga, 2002, pp. 24-25).

5.3.1. Method of Interview

Many methods can be used to conduct a qualitative research where a long practical tradition is behind many of them. Smith (1992), Hancock (1998), Bhattacharjee (2012) and others have observed and outlined many methods and terms such as the phenomenology, ethnography, fieldwork, case study, qualitative inquiries, participants observations, evaluation of users' response and interview method which become practically synonymous. The latter is the widely practised and flexible method in built environmental research where reliable, reasonable and in-depth data can be produced. During the interview, the researcher can address the subject of the main aim of the study, and thus draw or extract what enhances the research by the descriptions provided by participants during their analysis of the nature of social aspects, relations, interactions, practices and cultural experiences of the community (Amaratunga, 2002, p. 25). The researcher needs to provide the meaning of the phenomenon under study and the main objectives of the research. Semi-structured and, sometimes unstructured interviews, are largely used in qualitative research methods in analysing and investigating particular social and cultural phenomenon. These tools are great for enabling both the interviewee, to freely express the phenomenon, and the interviewer, to flexibly direct the discussion. The important is the creation of informant rather than respondent of the participant. Structured method, sometimes called '*focused phenomenon*', can work well in pre-defined aspects and factors (Hancock, 1998, pp. 9-10).

According to above-mentioned points and generating information, this method is revealed as the base for showing and detecting other tools and sources, particularly historical resources including archival records, photographs and maps. It is a relevant way in collecting knowledge based on providing information for the purpose of obtaining further explanations and accounts. It creates an active relation between the researcher and interviewees that encourages interviewees in freely introducing some concrete evidence such as photographs, books and maps or transcripts to promote their arguments. As long as the fieldwork refers to three historical periods and relates to specific inquiries embedded in research strategy, interviews conducted are dealing with historical records of the traditional house and *mahalla* and socio-cultural aspects of society. Architects, historians, sociologists and representatives of high-profile families describe the main segment of the former issue. This segment comprises thirty persons of different intellectual backgrounds and interests.

Key people in the second issue are composed of local residents, especially those homed selected cases, considerably users of these contexts and well-known elders for the purpose of calling for information on past experiences and practices. Totally, thirty persons of different ages, sexes (ten out of them were females), and cultural backgrounds were selected and interviewed throughout the fieldwork. One to two hours' period was the time spent in each interview. In some

cases, an open interview with 4-5 persons had been conducted. These interviews are more useful and reliable, where every argument followed by or recalled further explanations and arguments from others and each viewpoint was supported or contradicted by others. This type had been conducted when the researcher called to attend a social gathering, attended by many people, to discuss many issues regarding traditional socio-cultural aspects of Iraqi society and the home and social life in traditional contexts. Such meetings occur significantly during the month of Ramadan and, especially, after breakfast, where friends and acquaintances gather in one of the houses or coffeehouses. This segment has been recognised as impressive research tools, which directed the study to certain knowledge regarding daily habits, customs, rituals, traditions and relations between residents of these contexts.

Questions, interviews' categories and times, relating to the previous groups, have been listed in appendices A and B. Questions poured in general in discussing many of the underlying factors and essential principles in the formation of the traditional environment. They relate extensively to the concept of privacy and gender segregation, social cohesion and solidarity, social equity and social stability. They discuss the inter-changeability of social spaces and the actual application of socio-spatial flexibility between domestic and outside realms. They shed light on the practice of everyday life in traditional contexts by addressing the social, cultural and religious rituals and habits and the performance of daily practices and experiences. At the same time, they deal with identity, tradition and sustainability concepts, especially those directed at professionals, such as architects, planners, historians, sociologists and stakeholders.

5.3.2. Observation Method

Data and information collected from many resources may be of limited value or hard to verify or validate especially questions relating to the behavioural actions of interviews' participants in specific contexts and occasions. Sharing people's experiences and interactions, their way of thinking, feeling and acting on such occasions can be useful to offer more reliable and trustful information. Direct observation and experience of the phenomenon reveal specific social and cultural activities that reacted to illustrate the spatial and physical features of this phenomenon. Written descriptions, video recording, photographs and artefacts, as well as the documentation are many tools for this strategy to collect information or observable data that can be extrapolated from certain phenomenon (Hancock, 1998, pp. 12-13). Practising this method in the traditional *mahalla* is based on recording data during the transition from the most public domain of the *mahalla* to the utmost private of the house and investigation of semi-public/private realms. Focus on many social considerations, such as privacy, social cohesion and solidarity, the sequential and hierarchical order of spaces and actual use of each of them through daily practice for users of these contexts are important factors in achieving the purpose of this method.

5.3.3. Documentation Method

In response to previously mentioned points, and in order to include research elements and principles of the home environment in a clear method, and in line with the impact of social, cultural and behavioural values of the concept of everyday life, the researcher depends on many sources and narratives to find out the reasons behind the spatial and physical formation of the traditional house in Iraq. These sources incorporate narratives and historical events drawn from the work of Ali Al-Wardi, concerning the development and nature of Iraqi society (1951, 1965, 1969-1979); Yusuf Karkush, in his work '*Ta'rikh Al-Hilla*' (*The History of the city of Hilla*) (1965), and the work of L.A.N. Raouf, '*Housing and Social Segregation in Iraq*' (1985), in addition to archival and documentary analysis of many others. Different types of documents provide ideas, data and information relating to the phenomenon in question. In order to follow the relations between social, cultural and anthropological aspects of Iraqi society and the organisation of different social spaces for many houses in different contexts of Iraq, it is necessary to provide research strategy that can cover the historical period that stretching from 1869 until this moment. This date is considered as a temporal determinant of much of the remnants of traditional houses that go back to this date. It refers to a period of transition from a traditional society to another that is incorporated into the global capitalist market (Bianca, 2000, p. 80).

Empirical study passes through three related temporal phases where each of them has its factors, causes and, sometimes, specific sources to gather information. These phases overlap with each other through transitional periods where many features of each of them may be realised in the other (Raouf, 1985, p. 368). The first phase covers the end of the Ottoman rule in Iraq (1869-1914). Previously mentioned resources and other historical accounts are the main sources used to collect data or obtain information covering this period. Historical and archival records, photographs and old documents registering any event, as well as interviews with many historians, socialists and lecturers in humanities and social sciences supporting research decisions and process, have been adopted with respect to the spatial organisation of the various activities of the population. They are considered as important sources that can provide appropriate concepts and adequate answers to the asked questions (Lawrence, 1987, p. 55). Much of these resources, as well as additional methods describing research strategy, are used in the second historical phase, that spanning between 1920 to the collapse of the dictatorial regime of Saddam Hussein in 2003. This phase is divided into three temporal subdivisions. The first period is between 1920 and 1958 covering the British mandate and the monarchy until 1958's revolution. The second, with initial four transitional years, begins from 1958-1979, including the reveal of the major changes in the development of the housing sector in Iraq. Historical narratives, accounts and talks, collected from interviews with the elderly, as well as novels and stories of many intellectuals and novelists in the social life of the family, are many of research tools. These methods are based on the study of the spatial organisation of various social activities in the traditional home, as well as the principles behind shaping the spatial morphology of the *mahalla*. Reliability and validity of these sources can be verified when more interviewees or participants have mentioned, listed or recounted the event,

and when there are written materials talking about the same point. The third sub-division covers the period between 1979 and 2003 where Iraq was under the regime of Saddam Hussein. Three obvious changes can be observed within the latter stage including the start of the Iraqi-Iranian war, the impact of the Gulf war and economic embargo imposed on Iraq at the beginning of the 90s of the last century, and finally the fall of Saddam Hussein's regime in 2003. This point in time includes many major projects and changes that have been implemented according to personal and political decisions. It shows great shifts in the nature of Iraqi society and its underlying aspects, principles and beliefs.

The contemporary phase has begun since 2003 to the present time. For this period, field work investigation was conducted through the use of different means and strategies, such as the analysis of many specified case studies and documentary survey of the current organisation and use of *mahalla's* different realms in the city of Kadhimiya and other similar socio-cultural contexts. Contemporary examples have been selected depending on the evolution of the house and residential patterns for each period, which reflect the change in the character and values of Iraqi society. This part have used many materials collected from official institutions including the master plan for the specified sector, and pre-drawn and surveyed cases by the academic teams, architects and researchers. Periodical existence, participation and observation of people's daily lives supported by photographs, unstructured and open-ended interviews with residents and users display reliable means of collecting data and information. The latter method was conducted with many architects, planners, officials, decision-makers and socialists discussing social, cultural, behavioural as well as economic impact on the architecture of home and *mahalla*. Discussion depends on the analysis of socio-spatial relations and interaction, and investigation of various social activities, including cooking/eating, reception, socialising and sleeping in the traditional house and many contemporary examples. This approach leads the study into a kind of comparative analysis between the positive and negative aspects of both traditional and contemporary contexts. Selection of contemporary cases is based, to a large extent, on many categories including; firstly, residential settlements are designed and constructed according to specific and detailed social, cultural and economic values and considerations, and for specific class of society, preferably for those with limited income; secondly, selected complex is in fact under conditions of use in order to extrapolate residents ideas, perceptions and perspectives of its social, cultural, spatial and architectural characteristics; and finally, comparative method with the traditional context produce important data regarding the concept of sustainability, which represents one of the main objectives of the research.

5.4. Strategy of Analysis

Sorting and Classifying data for the purpose of building interpretations (Mason, 2002, p. 147) are the following goal of the research. This can help in focusing on and organising the collected information for further investigations. It supports and enriches the theoretical part of the study (Yin, 1994, pp. 104-105). Collected data and information from the three periodical analyses will be

categorised and analysed on the basis of research elements and inquiries in order to clarify the social, cultural and everyday practice of home. This will respectively determine the required spatial and physical properties of the different public/private spaces and their impact on the architecture of the home. Content analysis will be utilised in matching the collected information with research main aim, questions and concerns. Data explanation, which forms the final phase of the research, will identify the architecture of the home and the shaping principles of the house and *mahalla*. Viewing evidence and comparing selected cases with contemporary ones will enrich research interpretations through detecting differences and similarities. Moreover, data and information have been collected from various sources and the comparative analysis will be largely used to provide the sustainable potentials and difficulties of social, cultural and spatial properties of both contexts in order to determine the ideal perspective for our approach to more sustainable developments.

5.5. Limitations of the Methodology

Many problems encountered during the conduct and analysis of data collected from different ways and research tools. Research restrictions can be attributed to a set of circumstances suffered by the community in the last decades of the twentieth century.

Iraqi society is currently undergoing critical political and security situation that affects people's social life as a whole, and their outlook against a stranger, especially when they have no idea about his intentions. This led to the promotion of mistrust between members of the community, and to not to disclose anything concerning their social life or to freely express their real situation for fear of its impact on their lives and the future of their families. Accordingly, part of the information that has been collected, especially from the questionnaire, is unrealistic and does not reflect people's actual behaviours, beliefs and feelings, particularly that concerning the mutual relations between family members and their intimate interaction inside the house. Therefore, a large part of the information has been eliminated through comparing them with reasonable and more trustful data collected from other resources. The excluded information will form a cognitive base for further researches when discussing, for example, political and economic criteria and the extent of their impact on home architecture and organising space. On the other hand, residents and users of traditional contexts are of low-order social class, in which the majority are unqualified or have no idea about the real meaning of social and cultural factors and the role of everyday life in the design process of the house or the *mahalla*. Consequently, answers obtained related generally to environmental potentials of traditional houses despite repeated clarifications of the meaning and concept of these values. Moreover, specificity and sensitivity of these criteria lead the individual to refrain from providing the real answer despite, sometimes, the use of personal interview method and repeating asking the question in a different format. Therefore, questionnaire results directed the study to rely on interviews analysis, observation method, trusted resources and approved documents in gathering information. Moreover, they depend on the viewpoint of

specialists; such as architects, planners, historians and sociologists, or compare the answers with each other and adopting what is confirmed by more than one person to prove their validity.

Above restrictions led the study to avoid the quantitative analysis of data collected due to lack of validity, reliability and credibility in achieving real results with respect to the values and nature of Iraqi society and the impact of inherited aspects of home architecture. Adopted methodology is extremely time-consuming effort to analyse data and information towards producing a number of interesting and reasonable results. Previous points are the main limitations of the methodology in order to introduce accurate and realisable findings that could be relied on in presenting research recommendations and approaching its main aim.

Synthesis

Building a framework and methodological approach for research practical analysis is the main goal of this chapter. It is conducted according to specific principles of inquiries based on a combination of many approaches to the home environment which are discussed previously. Qualitative methodology has been chosen for this study because of its ability to establish an ideal meaning and concept of the phenomenon from the viewpoint of participants. The main factor here is to monitor, observe and control users' behaviours and interactions through a real participation in their daily lives.

The analysis will start from the macro level, represented in the whole urban fabric and the *mahalla*, and progressed to the investigation of the socio-cultural aspects of the micro level manifested by the house. This pattern of the sequential investigation will assist in the detection of the key factors or determinants of the built form, in the extrapolation of the underlying principles at every level, and in the disclosure of the composition of the home environment.

CHAPTER VI

HOME AND '*MAHALLA*' IN A HISTORICAL SEQUENCE;
FROM 1869-2015

Introduction

The historical evolution of the built environment over the passage of time with all its meanings and uses had been studied by many scholars such as Lewis Mumford (1961), Kevin Lynch (1972), Leonardo Benevolo (1975), and Gilles F. Barbey (1980) and others. They have revealed various concepts of the home in relation to corresponding approaches to the built environment. The importance of history or the historical understanding of any built environment lies in that it is a major source of knowledge and culture. Reasons behind the pursuit of historical knowledge on any subject, especially in social and cultural studies lie, according to Antoon de Baetes (2009, pp. 26-27), in didactic and metaphysical interests. The former includes the possession of historical awareness and the understanding of specific society and its social and cultural values through situating the present and helping inform current decisions. The latter covers the understanding or enhancement of our own everyday life referring to the necessity of particular socio-cultural principles of the community in the creation of a specific identity. Levi Strauss, on the other hand, takes history as a type of code which is, according to Sartre, not like any other codes. As an interpretation of the past, history is the practical application of some sort of conceptual apparatus, while, as temporality, it reflects and shows an important aspect of daily life for a particular community (Giddens, 1979, p. 199). Both concepts are correct. Historical understanding of the impact of social and cultural factors in the spatial configuration of the house and the morphology of the mahalla in traditional contexts is an important approach for, or source of, knowledge, that can help us to conceive the influence of contextual qualities in our daily lives. Despite the lack of historical perspective in the main direction or trend of socio-cultural studies, this approach represents largely an important perspective, or point of view, to the understanding of residential environments. It includes, on one side, *social nature* which encompasses the history of home life in a specific context and the spatial organisation of residential units; and, on the other side, *personal nature* covering inhabitant's daily biography and practices (Lawrence, 1987, p. 3). The dual nature of historical issues simplifies the correlation of social values among family members inside the house or between them and the community.

Scholarly studies in the history of housing have become more versatile because of the growing interest in the provision of adequate housing for the various categories of the population. The house, according to the perspective of several studies, takes variety concepts with regard to a variety of settings. Some studies have identified it as the container for or embodiment of social values and cultural references. Its socio-spatial order reflects both stability and change in spite of its relations with personal attitudes and socio-cultural irregularities. In respect to this principle, Rom Harre' (1979, cited in Lawrence, 1987, p. 51) states that "*the relationship between habitat and resident is dynamic and changeable, and it includes factors which may remain unresolved over a relatively long period of time*". This change is considered as an important factor for both the whole contextual environment and the single residential unit. Many issues and themes have been analysed and employed in the investigation of housing patterns for different social and economic classes in certain periods of time. The great interest of architects, planners and social historians

in such situations is how to provide adequate housing in terms of local construction techniques rather than basic social values. Based on the scope of many studies, human values and the surrounding context determine the design and functional properties of the house. Others have discussed either plots' layouts or building regulations and structural policies implicated in the construction of houses. Home design and its functional settings, in such studies, are separate from each other to a large extent (Lawrence, 1987, pp. 4-6).

Since the 2nd World War, the system of social values and cultural beliefs have been diversified to the extent that the values, associated with the architecture of the house and urban design, have become extremely difficult to be detected or accounted in addition to the incremental change in the meanings and values attributed to the built environment. Therefore, it is necessary to analyse the development of the house, even social and activity spaces within its boundaries, in terms of a temporal study. According to the research methodology, the research strategy and major concerns, this chapter discusses the historical development of the home and the *mahalla* in Iraq since a preconceived period of time. The main objective is to investigate history in order to construct narrative background that can clarify the architecture of the house and *mahalla* along the social and cultural values that granted the context its specific spatial and physical form.

6.1. Historical Dimensions of the Defined Periods

“Any society cannot be understood in its current state unless we perceive and understand the events this society passed through in its different historical periods..... Each historical event has its own significant influence, more or less, on people’s current behaviour and thinking”, (Al-Wardi, 2009, p. 3).

In discussing the role of socio-cultural factors and the influence of daily practices in determining the spatial arrangement of different activities, and shaping the spatial morphology of the *mahalla*, it is important to identify a specific historical point to start the study from. To put the country in a historical context, it should be noted that central and southern parts of the current Iraq, bounded by the two major rivers of Tigris and Euphrates, were used, in the ancient period, to be known as Mesopotamia. This was the environmental context of some of the world’s oldest civilizations, including the Sumerian, Akkadian, Babylonian, and Assyrian. Subsequently, the country had been alternately occupied by the Persian and Turks for about four centuries. During these occupations, Iraqis were affected by unstable situations and conflicts between the Ottoman Turks and the Safavid Empire. Each supports respectively specific social group of Iraqi society at the expense of another strengthening, thus, the Sunni-Shia crack. Both groups were used by Ottoman’s and Safavid’s powers to mobilise local support for the sake of the occupation. This type of conflict had weakened Ottoman’s control over its provinces especially in Iraq where tribal migrations and authorities had dominated the social and cultural nature of society. Most Iraqi cities and *mahallat* became under the control of the Shaykhs who ignored and did not take into account the Ottoman administration in Baghdad. Deterioration of urban life under the cycle of tribal authorities had been

stopped by the Mamluks, in the early eighteenth century, who gradually asserted authority regardless of the Ottomans. The administration of 'Suleyman the II' (1780-1802) had made significant steps in determining the rule of law in the judgement of Iraqis. Between 1638 AD and the collapse of the Turks in 1917, Iraq was almost in the light of autonomy within the framework of the rule of the Ottoman Empire (Al-Azzawi, 1969, p. 91). This situation reflected a large extent the instability of the Ottoman rule which eventually reached its end by the First World War's conclusion. In 1921 AD, Iraq declared as a kingdom and was granted, in 1932 AD, the formal independence after the ending of the British mandate. After the revolution of July 14, 1958, led by the army, a republic regime and administration was established by Abdul Karim Qasim. Republican administrative system was continued by successive regimes until the formation of a new government in the framework of a federal democratic parliamentary republic in 2003.

Before discussing the reasons behind the selection of the historical periods, it ought to be mentioned that about 91% of what remains of traditional residential units in Iraq are about 100-150 years old and dated back to the mid-nineteenth century. There was no evidence of the existence of such houses prior to this date due to the impact of different environmental, political and economic reasons in addition to the temporal duration of building materials used in the construction of houses. It is worth mentioning that these traditional areas were not exposed to maintenance or renovation except for a few of them which have been recorded within the archaeological sites. The greater part of them was left to inhabitants, if their income allows doing the required maintenance, with the absence of any specific regulations, reliable determinants or reasonable properties (Warren and Fethi, 1982, p. 42; Raouf, 1985, p. 368). Therefore, a large proportion of such complexes became increasingly in poor structural conditions along with the demolition of others under the pretext of re-development. This is conceivable, especially when we note that the price per square meter in these contexts began in a significant increase compared with the economic benefits that can be achieved in case possibility of protection or maintenance.

According to aforementioned evidence, the introduction of Ottoman reforms, around 1869 AD, was considered as the critical date of the real change and transition in Iraqi society from the traditional one to that incorporated into the global capital market. Exciting and widespread changes were accompanied by both the introduction of the reform and the new Ottoman administration of Midhat Pasha (1869-72). It was around this date when the face of the city started to be changed according to the Western model, and modern characters of Iraqi society began to be articulated (Fethi, 1977, p. 243-245). To fluid situation and simplify complex, I will argue that the study of social aspects and cultural values, affected the spatial development of the architecture of the home, *mahalla* and Iraqi housing process as well, have mainly passed through three related temporal phases of change since 1869 AD. Each of them has its own social and cultural factors imprinted on the architecture of its residential units and urban forms. What can be observed in these phases is that they interfere with each other through transitional in-between periods. Elements of each of them can be found and marked in other phases. The first phase was the latter part of the Ottoman rule from 1869 AD till the end of the 1st World War in 1918 AD. The following phase includes the British mandate period (1920-1932), the monarchy order (1932-

1958) and the republican system from the 1958's revolution and, finally, the collapse of the Dictatorial regime of Saddam Hussein in 2003. The third phase covers the social and cultural aspects and principles that dominated the nature of Iraqi society since 2003.

6.1.1. Phase I: The Later Part of Ottoman Rule, (1869-1918)

As was mentioned earlier, the spatial and physical morphology of the city of Baghdad, from the twelfth century to around the mid-nineteenth century, was largely static with no remarkable changes, at the household level or urban form. However, Iraqi cities in the Ottoman era, especially before the middle of the 19th century, were in clear degradation and ruin to the extent that they were not cities in the understood sense of the concept of the word 'city'. They were more like villages than cities. According to the works, writings and descriptions of many historians and travellers, such as the German 'Carsten Niebuhr' in 1765 and the English 'Keibel' in 1824 (Figure 6.1), most Iraqi cities built of mud with the exception of a small number of houses that were of brick. Baghdad was the largest among other cities and the centre of government and civilization. It represents the capital of Iraq and the main centre for gatherings of traders and artisans. We can imagine the deterioration of other Iraqi cities when we realise the bad situation of the city of Baghdad at that time in all aspects of life (Bianca, 2000, p. 249; Al-Wardi, 1965, pp. 120-121).

Between 1869 and 1914, the city went through a series of Western-inspired modernisation

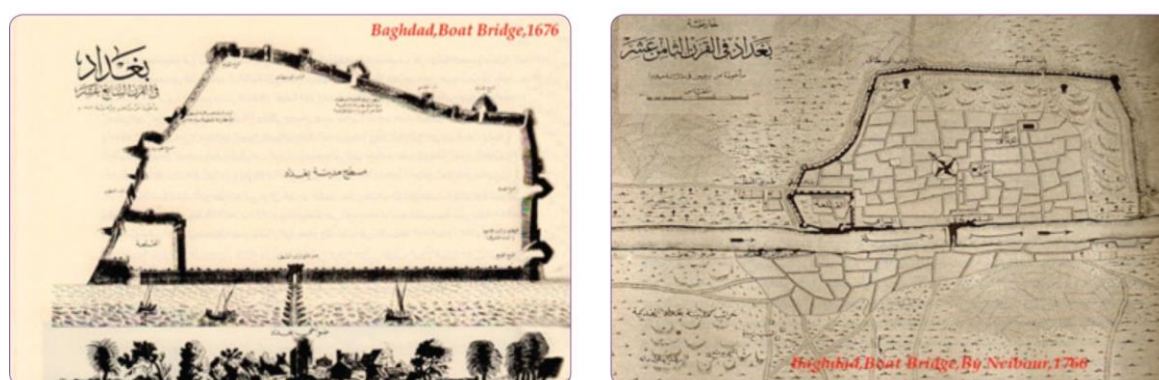


Figure 6.1: Plan of Baghdad in the 18th century, by Carsten Niebuhr, 1765 (Al-Hasani, 2012, p. 82)

schemes under the rule of two Turkish Pashas, Midhat Pasha (1869-72) and Nadhim Pasha (1909-1918). The most significant change was the demolition of the old wall of the city. Midhat Pasha, who accidentally left the four Gates of the city un-demolished, planned to build a French-style 'boulevard' instead of the old wall but managed only to complete a few parts of it. The result of this change was the detection of the city to flood risks in addition to its openness to further expansions which began occurring to the north of the citadel (Fethi, 1977, p. 243-245). Changes, made by **Midhat Pasha**, transformed the face of **Baghdad** by ordering, for the completion of these changes, the demolition of part or section of the wall of the traditional context for more urban expansion. Midhat's great attention was cast in modernising the city of Baghdad on the basis of the Western model. The end of this period had witnessed a clear and significant shift in

the shape of the city through the open of al-Rashid Street by Nadhim Pasha (Figure 6.2). Completion of this project required the demolition of a large part of the traditional urban fabric. This project was an attempt by this governor to create a direct line for the new mode of transport, and an economic and trade centre (Bianca, 2000, pp. 75-76).

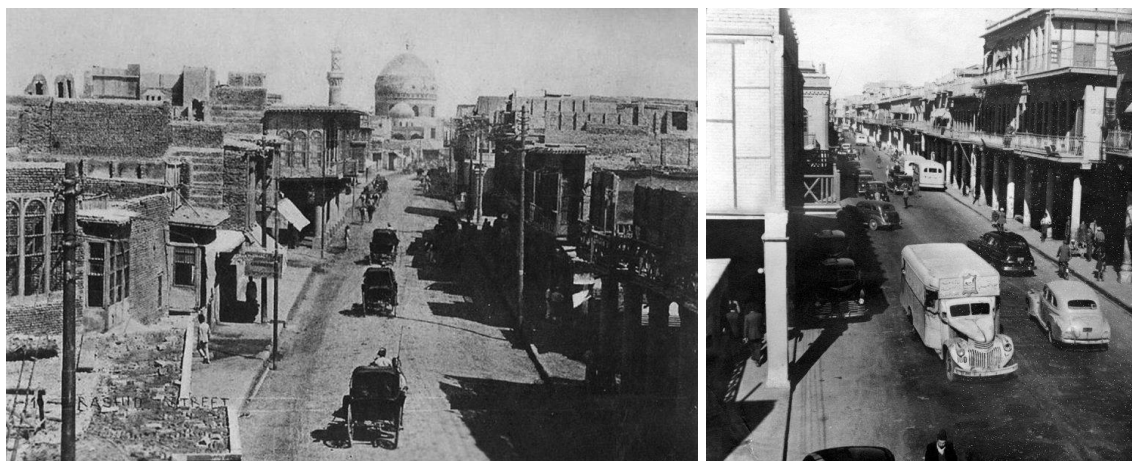


Figure 6.2: Images showing the huge destruction of the traditional context. Al-Rasheed Street in 1913(Left); and 1945 (Right) (Source: Al Siliq, 2008, p. 64)

6.1.1.1. Socio-Cultural Aspects of Iraqi Society

The human being, according to many sociologists, is a natural product of the social conditions and circumstances more than natural inheritance. According to Emile Durkheim (1982), the human, grew up in any environment, exposed to some kind of social pressure and coercion from that environment that affecting respectively his social and cultural values, his thinking, habits and customs. He, on the one hand, cannot get rid of the impact of this pressure; and the society, on the other hand, encourages him to continue to succumb to these values and to respect them. Moreover, he must be part of the social system of the *mahalla*, in people's way of thinking and behaviour, in order to obtain respectable position among them. The human, in traditional contexts, did not think by his abstract mind, but by the mind of his society. He looked to things and distinguished them as suggested, proposed and determined within the line drawn already by the community. Any attempt to lead him to another way of thinking was useless and considered as a type of error, delusion and misguidance (Barnes, 1965, p. 506; Al-Wardi, 2009, pp. 164-165).

An important research of Dr. Mohammed Salman Hassan in (1958), published by the institute of statistics in the University of Oxford, reached many crucial results relating the nature of Iraqi society during the Ottoman period. In this research, he found out that Iraqi population in 1867 was just over one million and a quarter; and the percentages of the main three categories of Iraqi population were confined to the 35% of nomadic tribes, 41% of rural tribes and 24% of the townsfolk of the total population. This result is a clear indication of the nature of Iraqi society and the major impact of nomadic values compared with urban aspects. By contrast, people of the town were not really introducing civilised values due to the impact of surrounding nomadic tribes. The latter threatened city's residents and forced them to use the same values in an attempt to

confront or cope with these groups. Specific nomadic values, such as solidarity, revenge and so on, became part of the social and cultural factors of city's population (Al-Wardi, 2009, p. 119).

Many social aspects and cultural norms such as privacy, social interaction, tradition and identity have been thoroughly analysed in previous chapters. In this part, several social values of Iraqi society during this period will be investigated demonstrating their role in the formation of the traditional home and *mahalla*. They will show how Bedouin values influenced the beliefs of the community, and in the drafting of people's relations, practices and everyday interactions.

6.1.1.1.1. Social Life

Features of the social factors and social situation in the Iraqi city showed the influence of nomadic values as a result of its contact with neighbouring tribes. Iraqi cities from the middle of the 19th century had begun to grow rapidly in its population and architectural developments. These changes indicated that the Iraqi city had become a source of urban values which stood against nomadism prevailed in Iraq earlier. Emerging cultural conflict was considered as a natural social phenomenon in Iraq, which had a significant impact on the spatial morphology of the traditional home and the *mahalla* due to divergent social and cultural aspects, each group possessed. As a result, Iraqis became under the weight of two contradictory trends. The first drove them to adhere to nomadic values, inherited from their ancestors, while the other was pushing them to urban values which gradually began to spread among the people. The impact of this conflict varied from one city or place to another depending on various factors such as the extent of nomadic control over the specific city or urban context, the largest of its markets as the main field for social interaction and daily practices, the numbers of foreigners or visitors as effective transferring elements of socio-cultural values and, finally, the extent of the governmental control or the power of the central administration (Al-Wardi, 2009, pp. 258-261).

The majority of people of the city were proud of some aspects of social hospitality and generosity. This factor had its influence on the spatial organisation of the different activities of the house. Each house had a separate or integrated space for guests illustrating the public sphere of the house, which in standalone or separate cases called '*al-Barrani*' or '*al-Diwan*'. The rest of the house called '*al-Haram*', dedicated to women, representing the private sphere where the factor of privacy is its main determinant. From this term, the Iraqi woman quoted her name, as '*al-Hurma*', in the local dialect or slang. The area and capacity of *al-Barrani* or *al-Diwan*, its physical properties, spatial arrangement and domestic features determined the social status of the family and the owner of the house. This space was used for reception, meeting and socialisation, eating and sleeping, in many circumstances, indicating the multi-functional characteristic of social spaces in the traditional home. A high concentration had been given to the architecture of this space. Many houses included two parts with separate entrances where each had, in some cases, its own courtyard (Warren and Fethi, 1982, p. 42; Bianca, 2000, pp. 90-91). Generally speaking, the house in this period maintained and strengthened to a large extent the social life of its inhabitants through its spatial organisation and physical properties (Al-Taie, *et. al*, 2012, p. 39).

6.1.1.1.2. Sense of Neighbourliness in the Traditional *Mahalla*

Prevalent social principle among people in the traditional *mahalla* is that '*neighbour before the house*'. Iraqi people are largely repeating many words indicating the impressive importance and position of the neighbour, such as, for example, "*your neighbour, then your neighbour and, thus, your brother*". A great deal of people are still remembering their old neighbours and rushing to help them in calamities, even they have left their *mahalla*. If anyone or a family, for example, came to live or reside in the *mahalla*, neighbours began a thorough investigation about the morals and ethics of the new neighbour. If they found him honest, sincere and straightforward, they would consider him as one of them. Otherwise, they forced him in every possible way to leave the *mahalla*. As long as the newcomer was very busy on his first days in the transfer of his furniture, neighbours tended to offer him cooked food as a help from them and to connect him firmly in a way that does not allow him to betray them later, and to promote the concept of *al-Jura* (neighbourliness).

This factor began to weaken and disintegrate due to the expansion of the city where people were forced to leave their traditional homes to live in new settlements in the suburbs. New neighbourhoods were not able to maintain traditional neighbourly factors. The main reason behind this was that people were separately moved to new districts and were apparently under the control of the propensity of individuality. At the same time, people in new neighbourhoods did not care what kind of people they were going to adjoin (Al-Wardi, 2009, p. 275). The social status of specific families, the nature of their social structure, their cultural background and the concept of transcendence, arrogance and personal superiority enhanced the concept of social segregation with the others whom, as they thought, were of lower social status. Furthermore, designing elements of new residential districts did not take into consideration the socio-cultural values of traditional society and the influence of routine day-to-day practices on the spatial morphology of the neighbourhood. Their morphological regulation relied mainly on gridiron's arrangement and the use of wide inhuman spaces that giving a major role to the new method of transport, which should up to each residential unit, rather than the human and underlying socio-cultural aspects.

Nevertheless, '*traditional neighbourhood values*' and '*honour of the mahalla*' were deeply rooted in Iraqi's personality, habits, customs and conventions especially among those of similar social status. These beliefs dominated society's socio-cultural values of this period and first few decades after the 1st World War, especially in traditional contexts. Many families, nowadays, are still refusing to move to specific contexts due to, as they argued, the bad social nature, morals and behaviour of their users or inhabitants. Others are continued practising their everyday lives and community's religious and social rituals in the traditional context where they spent most of their lives in. They continued, for example, using the same local mosque of the *mahalla* in practising religious beliefs, shopping from its *suq* (local market) or using its coffeehouses. These features provide concrete evidence of the sustainable phenomenon of the traditional urban form rather than irrelevant aspects of new quarters, as will be discussed in the following parts.

6.1.1.1.3. Traditional Home Life

Home life, here, means the bond of familiarity and intimacy between members of the same house or the family such as the relationship between a man and his wife or his children inside the home limits. In the Iraqi traditional *mahalla*, home life can be described as having been somewhat weak and incoherent. The man, or the head of the family, spent rarely much time with his wife or his children. He ate hardly at home after finishing his work. He used significantly the *mahalla's* local restaurants or gathered with his friends or relatives in one of *mahalla's* houses or coffeehouses. He was often dressed his cloak and headed to the coffeehouse, the *Diwan* or the like. The house was entirely for women who, on the other hand, did not accept the presence of the man. At the same time, children were always outside playing with their peers from the sons of neighbours. Accordingly, home members were mostly scattered, dispersed and did not gather except in specific occasions such as food or sleep times (Al-Wardi, 2009, p. 276).

It can be argued that the weakness of home life in the traditional *mahalla* was a general phenomenon in Iraq. It was clearer in cities due to many aspects and factors. The first was the '*strong Hijab*' which forced the woman to be home. The house, therefor, became the only way for women's freedom and her life. In this regard, women are used to visiting each other daily and speak about their own affairs, their relatives and neighbours without any restrictions of the opposite sex. The second was the extended nature of the traditional Iraqi family where each social unit embraces several independent households within the same house borders. Women of these families used largely the space of the central courtyard as gathering and interacting space most times of the day. This situation forced men to leave the house in order to obtain some kind of comfort and rest outside it. The third was the concept of superimposition and arrogance in the personality of the Eastern man in traditional societies and the belief that the presence of the man in the house was a kind of shame and lack of virility. Otherwise, the man, who used to stay home more than the allowed or usual, was counted or considered in the eyes of his peers as an effeminate or with feminine tendencies. These values and many others had been adapted or excerpted from or were a reflection of the nomadic cultural values (Bianca, 2000, pp. 48-52). Therefore, men were often with their colleagues out of their homes, leaving the house completely to their wives. The final factor beyond the weakness of the traditional home life was the nature of the Iraqi house which was generally neglected and did not have the elegance, comfort or joy to the point that attracts men to stay in. Iraqi women were more interested in pots and stoves rather than beautifying and spreading joy in their houses which might encourage men to stay. The main reason is that the Iraqi woman went through difficult circumstances which forced her to neglect herself and her home in most cases, in contrast to the Syrian or Persian woman, for example, who always looked to be her home is the most attractive and cheerful place for her man. A modern Iraqi woman has begun to take care of herself and her house due to the influence of modern social and cultural values (Al-Wardi, 2009, pp. 276-277).

6.1.1.1.4. Family Cohesion

While the home life was weak, the nature of cohesion and consistency in the relationship between family members was very strong against strangers or who tries to snoop on the family affairs. Family members stood in good and bad times in solidarity and with a great tendency to help each other. Family cohesion in the Iraqi traditional *mahalla* represented one of the manifestations or aspects of the Bedouin heritage (Al-Hasani, 2012, p. 79). Iraqi family was introduced as a small clan against the others where anything faced each member, would hit respectively the rest. This attitude can be clearly observed in the words used by Iraqis for the time being in their insults. At the same time, family cohesion represents a kind of social insurance among family members. The spatial arrangement of the traditional courtyard house and the private domain of the central social space reflected and embodied this factor when family members gathered mostly in this space to discuss the nature of the family and different affairs facing its members (Bianca, 2000, p. 74).

This type of social cohesion has begun to weaken or disintegrate as a result of the individualism, modern civilisation brought with (Al-Wardi, 2009, p. 279). Members of the family in contemporary societies rarely combine with each other. At the same time, Organizing spaces in contemporary house encourage significantly in the weakness of this factor, and leads, according to the belief and proposals of many Iraqi sociologists, to a type of a '*hotel-like home*', as will be investigated in the following chapter.

6.1.1.2. Home and *Mahalla* in a Socio-Spatial Development

The architecture of the traditional house and the spatial and physical properties of the *mahalla* have been discussed and analysed thoroughly, in previous chapters, as they represented the only pattern known in the city of Baghdad during this period and before 1920. The same can be observed in different traditional districts of Baghdad, such as al-Rusafah, al-Karkh, al-Kadhimiya and al-A'adhamiya, and other parts of Iraq. It covers moreover the spatial and morphological organisation of the *zuqqa* (alley) system. Such study helps to elucidate and clarifying the evolution of the city and people's socio-cultural nature before 1920 or precisely until 1936 (Al-Ashab, 1974, p. 222). It presents at the same time daily practices and experiences of generations with regard to their cultural principles and social values embodied in an integrated pattern influencing the whole structure. In this part, the nature of the house and the *mahalla* during this period will be linked with the social aspects of Iraqi society demonstrating the effect of social and cultural factors in the development of the house and neighbourhood unit. Historically seen, this form dated far back as 2000 B.C. at the city of Ur, Babylon and Nineveh in Mesopotamia (Bianca, 2000, pp. 248-249). It translates simply the core values of Iraqi culture, social aspects, rituals, customs and traditions. It caters to and greatly enhances the basic needs of the user's daily life and practices.

According to the nature of Iraqi society in this period and the impact of Bedouin values, the house represented the whole kingdom of the Iraqi woman. It embodied her small paradise in the

first life. The woman, according to the belief of our ancestors, had two significant long journeys in her life. The first is her marriage when she leaves her parents' house to groom's one, while the second is when she leaves the whole life. This concept had been interpreted in an actual physical compound. This interpretation was revealed by the house and its spatial and physical properties. The female kingdom needed to be protected from aliens by many transitional spaces between the inside private sphere of the house and the outside world or the public sphere of the alley. These areas had been carefully handled by arranging different social spaces for the sake of the '*aura*', represented by the woman. Moreover, transitional spaces helped to avoid any unexpected interaction with strangers, and thus achieving required degree of privacy. Arranging spaces for this region, or the entrance, varies from house to house, according to the degree of social isolation required to prevent any direct visual intrusion from the outside world into the inside sphere. Moreover, the outer wall of the house includes many small windows on a rise that would not allow for this type of visual contact (Bianca, 2000, pp. 74-75). These spatial/physical qualities and many others had been emphasised and continued in the architecture of the house in this period, except houses which were built in the suburbs across the river of Tigris. Latter residential units were largely constructed according to similar spatial and physical properties of the introverted courtyard house, but with large and wide openings towards the outside represented, in most cases, by the river. Wealthy people, such as merchants and members of the government, had built these units after the demolition of part of the traditional context due to the developments made by Midhat Pasha and Nadhim Pasha.

The traditional courtyard house was continued as the typical shelter for the Iraqi family which was characterised by its extended nature where parents, grandparents and married sons could live together in the same house. In the case of the third generation or social level, a room or group of rooms had to be re-structured physically and spatially as an independent unit within the borders of the main one to accommodate newcomers or their children in the near future. In these circumstances, there was no crucial need to look after or build new housing units, even after marriage, to embrace children who mainly lived with the family and did not present any remarkable change in the family structure. Although there were some large houses, on the whole, house size and location were relatively evenly distributed and such matters were not causes of great concern (Raouf, 1985, p. 370). Architectural changes within the boundaries of the house had been linked to the social development and evolution of the family. Multifunctional nature of social spaces helped mainly in achieving this purpose, where each social space could simply be used for different tasks and purposes with no distinction between living rooms, bedrooms, dining rooms and so on. This characteristic was referred to simplicity as a primary nomadic value. Moreover, the use of integrated furniture into wall niches and folding mattresses for sitting and sleeping purposes, rather than permanent furniture, were the main feature of the domestic organisation of traditional units. These methods were necessary for the shifting nature of domestic functions expected in various situations and for different social purposes (Bianca, 2000, pp. 78-79). The modern Iraqi man is still carrying the tendency or desire of holding his sons and their families after marriage in the same house when he intends to build a new house. In this

respect, he tends to design many large bedrooms, at least 3-4 bedrooms, with separate bathroom and toilet for each in spite of the small social structure of his family and the propensity of each family member to build his own life away from his parents'.

There were no remarkable developments within the housing sector during this period. Most changes, achieved by Midhat Pasha or Nadhim Pasha, concerned mainly modernising the city, such as transport and service developments. On the scale of the *mahalla*, good neighbourly relations were continued to be overriding phenomena and essential factors with regard to Iraqi society. A particular type of solidarity, social cohesion, interaction and social integration were dominated this period and continued as key factors in the spatial/physical formation of the traditional *mahalla* (Al-Wardi, 1965, pp. 274-276). To put the urban factor in a socio-spatial development before and during this period, it might dramatically manifest in the spatial divisions between various professions and ethnoreligious districts. These contexts embodied identifying factors in the spatial and physical composition of the city. Traditional key components of the city, such as the mosque, the *suq*, khans and others were all represented complementary elements of the main residential district. At the same time, integrated nature of the traditional *mahalla* and the cohesion of the whole urban fabric, expressed by its external surrounding wall and internal mosque and *suq*, indicated the presence of a reciprocal relationship between the various divisions of the *mahalla* (Bianca, 2000, pp. 50-51). This kind of subdivision was often expressed by separate gates within the whole urban tissue. Homogeneous and closely knit communities were the main factors that characterised the traditional *mahalla*. The propensity of the various subdivisions and social groups to obtain protection for their members was greatly strong during this period where safety was at risk. Some traditional quarters (*mahallat*) depended on religious factors and identity, as mentioned in previous chapters, in achieving their solidarity and social cohesion, as is the case for the district of Kadhimiya or A'adhamiya (Figure 6.3). Others were based on ethnic or racial origin, as in the case of Al-Tawrat's *mahalla* (Raouf, 1985, p. 370). Some quarters were consolidated depending on economic factors in terms of the presence of specialised markets and specific professions as was the case with those of tanning, near stone quarries or slaughterhouses. Each community had its particular social relations, interactions, habits, customs and daily routine and practices. Despite the integrated nature of social classes within the residential fabric of the *mahalla*, there was no evidence that the homogeneity of different social classes was the basis for social solidarity. Above-mentioned aspects and factors were not, however, very different or diverse from each other as to form the main basis for any critical separation of social classes through the quarters (Lapidus, 1967, p. 87).

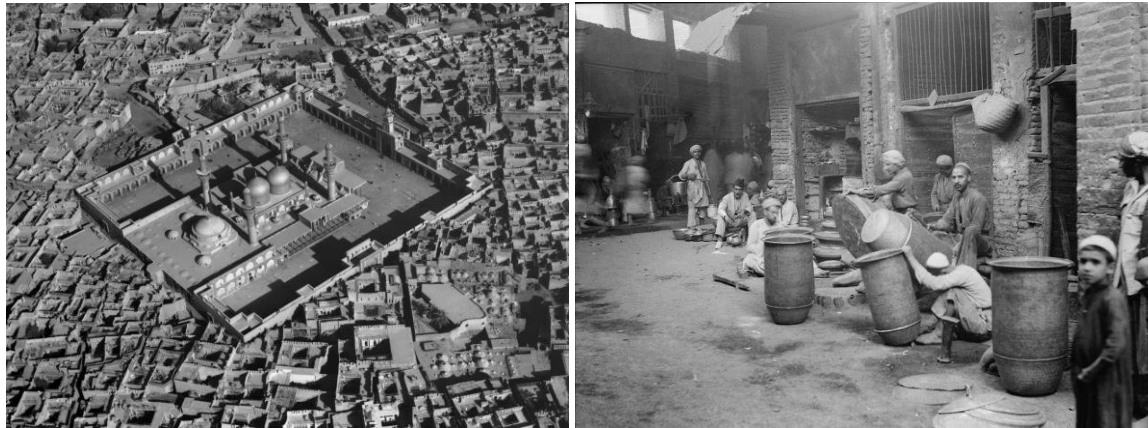


Figure 6.3: (Left) The traditional urban fabric of al-Kadhimiya in the 1920s; (Right) the division due to professions in the traditional built environment (Source: Al Siliq, 2008, p. 55)

Spatial organisation and sequential pattern of alleys; which are narrow, winding and often closed and led only to a cluster of homes, reflect inhabitants' urgent need for privacy, safety and protection from alien elements. Traditional houses within these quarters (*mahallat*) reflect the status ranks nature of society and the ecology of the place. They are compact in their spatial arrangement, mainly court-yarded, and almost closed visually to the outside. Principles of privacy, gender segregation, social solidarity and protection from the severe environment, especially heat and dust-winds, were overriding factors in home architecture in this period. Despite the variety of houses' size and internal decoration, they relied on a specific spatial arrangement and tended to have similar plan configuration. The spatial organisation did not express a very remarkable and noticeable social status, especially from the outside. Furthermore, houses were huddled together and integrated physically in a compact form articulating one large urban complex. This type of compactness was an outstanding feature of the traditional urban fabric until the beginning of the transitional period under the rule of the Ottoman governor, Midhat Pasha 1869-71, which notified the start point of major changes in the urban fabric (Raouf, 1985, p. 371).

Stabilisation, expansion and the special focus on private property, through the expropriation of communal tribal lands by a relatively small number of *shaykhs*, *aghas* and some merchants, were the significant changes characterising this period. These changes, as well as those referred to the impact of Western conceptual trends and technological evolutions, some improvements and maintenance work in the means of communication and some of the dominant features of the state authority, were of limited influence on the traditional housing form, related to socio-cultural factors and everyday life concerns. These improvements were mainly limited to specific changes in large cities such as Baghdad. The demolition of part of the city wall and the initiation of urban developments were among the main changes in this period. One of the municipal acts was the policy of constructing wide streets passing through traditional quarters with no regard to the spatial and physical structure of the existing urban fabric. New streets, the first of which was erected in Baghdad between 1869 and 1871, called '*Agd al-sakhar*' or 'Stone Alley' (Al-Wardi, 2009, p. 121), were aimed primarily at improving transport facilities. Nadhim Pasha, or 'the 2nd

Midhat', established the first wide street in Baghdad in 1910, called '*An-Nahar Street*' and later became known as '*Al-Mustansir Street*'. This street was the most straight and widened one compared with others in the old fabric of the city of Baghdad. Such developments affected land values and building regulations along their sides and produced a more daring and less introverted pattern of traditional houses reflecting some European effects in its spatial organisation and architectural details. As a result, some wealthy families had moved into traditional luxury units overlooking the outside in some specific places (Figure 6.4). Security, efficient urban services and the presence of Ottoman structures, as the citadel, had limited in some way the urban expansion of the city (Al-Hasani, 2012, p. 80).



Figure 6.4: Traditional housing units overlooking the outside and showing the openness towards the public in different part of Baghdad (Source: Noor, 1979, p.93)

6.1.2. Phase II: Modern Iraq; 1918-2003

Analysis of the architecture of the house in this period has been divided into three main and well-defined periods. Temporal subdivision refers to the fact that each period reveals different social and cultural values due to the impact of various economic and political changes, experienced by Iraq, since the end of the 1st World War, under the British Mandate, and even the collapse of the dictatorial regime, posed by Saddam Hussein, in 2003. Proposed periods help, on one way or another, in tracking the transformation of Iraqi society, its socio-cultural principles, changing aspects of everyday values, and therefore, the development of the house and the *mahalla*.

6.1.2.1. Period I: British Mandate and Monarchy; (1918-1958)

The first period began after the 1st World War, with the rule of the British Mandate and the monarchy period, until 1958. Origin of this period rooted deeply back in the preceding transition period, which began in the mid-19th century. Ottoman reforms, foreign trade expansion, and the 1st World War had prepared a military and administrative base for the British rule in Iraq. It can be argued here that, in spite of Iraq's independence in 1932, British hegemony over Iraq was clear to the extent that it represented a form of neo-colonialism. One of the benefits of the British control

was the gradual incorporation of the country into the global capitalist market, and its integration into the international economic system as an exporter of grain and, later, oil that occupied nearly 50% of Iraq's national income in 1953 (Raouf, 1985, p. 372). At the same time, modernising developments, which had begun in the reign of Midhat Pasha and Nadhim Pasha, became more pronounced and faster under the British Mandate.

6.1.2.1.1. Social Values of Iraqi Society

Iraqi society during this period had maintained to a large extent inherited social and cultural aspects. This period, according to the arguments of many researchers, represented an extension of the previous one in terms of the mutual relationship between family members, and between them and the outside community. Some researchers and historians believed that there was some sort of conflict between nomadic values and urban aspects, especially in the city. Ali Al-Wardi, in his study '*The nature on Iraqi society*' (1965), emphasised the vision of Ibn Khaldun and found him rightful in his argument that social and moral values of urban residents were far from Islamic principles. People mainly derived their principles and beliefs from Islam, while they, in their realism, were contrary to its teachings (Ibn Khaldun, 2004, pp. 877-880). This vision supports the argument of Al-Wardi of the dualism nature in the mentality of urban residents. The individual or the society could not be entirely blamed as long as the human represents the normal product of his circumstances rather than the individual or abstract thinking, and due to the great influence of political and economic standards (Al-Wardi, 1965, pp. 310-311). The entry of Westernised values, represented by the rule of the British Mandate, political conflicts in the subsequent period of monarchy and economic changes during this period had changed radically the social, cultural and behavioural values of society. These factors, in addition to the return of young Western-educated expertise to Iraq, had affected largely the socio-cultural values of Iraqi society, and therefore, the structure of the built environment at the household level, the *mahalla* and the whole city (Al-Hasani, 2012, pp. 81-82). On the other hand, Iraqi people had experienced a semi-social isolation for a long time which led them to stick hardly to their traditions against any unfamiliar changes especially that came with the entry of the British. Moreover, modernity and Westernised principles were considered, by some scholars and conservatives, as a deviation from Islamic moral values (Al-Wardi, 1965, p. 343). Therefore, Iraqi people had continued adhering to the same inherited social and cultural aspects, such as the sense of neighbourliness, social cohesion, privacy, social solidarity and social interaction, and practising the same values of the past everyday life. That can be observed in the nostalgia of the individual to the *mahalla*'s traditional context, its social values and cultural principles (Al-Hasani, 2012, pp. 79-80). Last values had heavily impacted on the spatial organisation of the house and the development of its architecture during this period by relying on the same traditional standards.

6.1.2.1.2. Change in the Urban Form of the Traditional *Mahalla*

The change in the urban fabric was emphasised by the use of the gridiron pattern in the design of new quarters rather than the integrated spontaneous form of the traditional *mahalla*. New districts were produced on the basis of the modern trend in architecture, with a particular emphasis on improving urban facilities. Functional zoning system, set back building heights, the building ratio in comparison with plot's size and so on, were some of the building regulations had been adopted to create a new kind of modern or Westernised neighbourhood. The division of its sectors and the organisation of its residential units were based primarily on the concept of social segregation and imported socio-cultural values revealing, consequently, the influence of modernity and the international style in architecture (Al-Mulla Huwaish, 1988, p. 29). Piercing or penetrating streets' policy, which started by Midhat Pasha and Nadhim Pasha as in the case of Al-Rashid Street, continued along this period in tandem with the demolition of large portions of the existing fabric. Their construction caused respectively a destruction of more than 500 traditional houses in just the 1920s of the last century. People, whose holding proved property deeds, had been compensated for the demolition of their homes and moved along with wealthy families to emerging new districts in the suburbs. Poverty forced the rest to remain in traditional districts which became gradually the most congested places and included the lowest residential standard (Al-Hasani, 2012, p. 80). A new pattern of the house, as a '*modified*' form of the traditional one, was developed and introduced (Raouf, 1985, pp. 372-373).

On the other hand and as a result of the process of land registration, Medhat Pasha proposed as an attempt to resolve the chaos of Iraqi tribes, lands were given in blocks to these tribes. Each piece of land became consequently a private property of tribal shaikhs, and therefore, did not solve the problems of tribes. During the early decades of the monarchy, in the 1920s, 1930s and during 1940s and 1950s of the last century, the '*hold over the state*' phenomenon in the interest of *shaikhs*, *aghas*, merchants and wealthy people was intensified and strengthened, while, for example, four-fifths of Iraqi families in 1958 became poorer and without property. These reasons, in addition to the land laws of 1932-38 and the international depression of the 1930s, resulted in subsequent periods a major migration from rural to urban districts. This situation had therefore caused a significant change in the nature of Iraqi society and the socio-cultural values of the individual. As a result, for example, about 12.6% of residents of Baghdad in 1947 were forced to live in temporary huts, called *Saraief* (singular *Sarifa*) (Al-Mulla Huwaish, 1988, pp. 32-34), and over half the population were in multi-family complexes (Raouf, 1985, p. 373).

Change in the nature of Iraqi society during this period, its socio-cultural aspects and the political and economic impact imposed on society led to a change in individual's viewpoint with respect to the concept and form of the house and the built environment. The following part will deal with the development of the house and housing patterns in this period with reference to many cases from different parts of the country. The architecture or the style of the traditional courtyard house will be excluded from these patterns as long as it represents the form that dominated the previous period.

6.1.2.1.3. Housing Typologies

An observation of the architectural evolution of home shows that the development of almost all housing units in this period fell primarily into three main types, if the traditional courtyard house, dominated the period before 1920, could be ruled out. The first was the *modified style* of the traditional one, which dominated the period 1920-36, such as the case in Jasim Siger's house in the *mahalla* of Mahdiya-Hilla (Figure 6.5) which was built inside the old tissue of the *mahalla*. This type preserved almost the spatial arrangement of the courtyard house, such as placing house's different spaces around a central open space. The entrance in this genre was centrally situated with respect to the courtyard and was used as a distributor in three directions. The central one, in front of the main entrance, leads directly to the courtyard, while the others open respectively onto the kitchen and the guest room. This form of spatial arrangement neglected to a certain degree the influence of privacy and put internal spaces or the private sphere of the house under the possibility of a direct visual contact with the outside on certain occasions. It reflected the influence of Western standards in architecture represented by the notions of centrality and monumentality in organising spaces. This type includes one or two levels with or, in many cases as this example, without the presence of *shanasheel*'. It leads consequently to the use of many openings in the outer wall towards the outside public sphere of the alley on the first and sometimes the ground level, breaking or affecting thus the privacy of the family. In some cases, the researcher noted that the central '*hosh or fin'a*' is surrounded by a continuous wall with a central door mediating each side and leading directly to a space recalling the '*iwan*' in traditional houses, or indirectly to a distributing corridor reflecting the shaded recess in the traditional one. This spatial subdivision came as a tendency from the family to dislocate house's different spaces and activities from the semi-public or, in some cases, public nature of the courtyard, and as an environmental treatment.



Figure 6.5: Jasim siger's house in the traditional urban fabric of *Al-Mahdiya mahalla* in the city of Hilla

The second model is the '*villa type*' that characterised the covered courtyard type introduced in Baghdad and other Iraqi cities in the period between 1936-1945, as is the case with 'Merjan House' in the city of Hilla (Figure 6.6). This form shows a significant shift toward the modern form. It reveals in some way the architectural standards of the modified style with some spatial and physical elements of the traditional introverted pattern. The remarkable change in this type is that the courtyard had been covered and turned into a large multi-purpose family space, called the

'hall', where house's different activities were arranged spatially around. The hall recalled the social and cultural influence of the courtyard, as the main realm that achieving family's everyday practices. The entrance, as a transitional space, includes a door on the opposite side of the main door leading directly to the main family hall, while the two others on the left side, in this case, lead straight family members and guests as well, to an open porch in front of the house and to 'al-Barrani' or the reception space. This treatment achieved privacy and social segregation in the presence of foreigners or guests. The space of the reception connects with the main family hall and the inside of the house, as the kitchen, through many doors' openings. Required privacy could be applied through the presence of the transitional space of the entrance between the inside and the outside, and the uplifting of the level of the ground. The area under this level and the first floor could be utilised as secured areas, for the sake of the harem (women), servants, and as storages. The nature of split levels, in this case, provided females with the ability to be in private spheres and away from the main ground level which, in specific social occasions and rituals, could be turned over into semi-public or public zone. The colonnade of the *Tarma*, at the first level, runs around the covered 'fin'a' (main family hall) on two or three sides, as in this case, and is combined with the closed female reception (*iwan-like*) space over the main reception area on the ground level. The latter space was used for women's gathering recalling the social nature of the *Ursi* in the traditional house. The visual connection between this space and the main hall, that allowing women only to observe the inside, was achieved through the presence of three doors and small balconies protruded into the void of the main hall, in this case, or by other architectural treatments. In many cases, this space was turned into a bedroom for the use of a separate family, in the case of marriage, revealing the extended nature of the Iraqi family. This typology had been re-utilised in the architecture of the house during the 1970s and 80s of the last century. This case study will be thoroughly discussed in the following chapter to reveal its significance in embodying the socio-cultural factors of the family.



Figure 6.6: Outside and inside views of Merjan house in the city of Hilla-Iraq

The third form reflects the influence of modern or Western trend in the architecture of the home. It had been developed in Baghdad after 1945 by, especially, young Iraqi engineers and architects who completed their study in the West (Al-Ashab, 1974, p. 226). Almost none of them offered any

distinction between modernisation, Westernisation and tradition manifested by, for example, the courtyard house which began to be forgotten or neglected since the 1930s on. Moreover, they failed to adapt their expertise to the social aspects and cultural values of Iraqi society and people's everyday life (Figure 6.7). The main architectural treatment in this type was the open nature of internal spaces towards the garden or the outside through the use of wide openings affecting dramatically the privacy of the family and the position of the woman. Private, semi-private/public and public spheres of different social spaces were blurred due to the impact of new or imported socio-cultural factors. Separation of the different spaces relied mainly on formal standards with no respect, in many cases, to social values or environmental factors. The architecture of the modern house reflected obviously the dual nature of people's mentality, as has been put forward by Ali Al-Wardi. People tended, on one side, to make some kind of spatial separation, for example, between the main family space (*hall*) and *al-Barrani* (reception room), while they, on the other side, opened these spaces to the outside and broke therefore the private nature of the inside or the privacy of the family. This form revealed the weakness of social cohesion between family members and reflected the social life of the contemporary family where its members met rarely each other, as they did in traditional units. At the same time, spatial organisation of the different activities allowed them to enter the house or leave it without any observation from or control of others through the use of many openings to the outside or, in many cases, more than one staircase. This typology is continued dominating following periods with some changes in the spatial arrangement of internal or external form.



Figure 6.7: The villa type house in the forties and the fifties of the 20th century (Source: Noor, 1979, p.116)

6.1.2.2. Period II: Post-evolutionary Iraq – Republican Rule (1958-1979)

The second period covers the post-revolutionary Iraq between 1958 and 1979. The 1958's revolution was the most significant event in this period. The regime of Abdul karim Qasim, which overthrew the monarchy, introduced mainly the urgently needed popular reforms in addition to the land reform. Nevertheless, this regime had no clear economic, social and political policies and was thus overthrown in 1963. The first four years were considered as a transitional phase in Iraq's modern history. State interventionist and development policies, which were opposed to the radical transformation of the social system, characterised the following regimes. They were, until 1979, nationalistic in their ideological orientation claiming the representation of the general interest of

the nation, and against antagonistic classes. With oil revenues, educational expenditure, health and social services and so on, governments produced a degree of re-organisation in income's distribution with no radical changes in the social system (Gabbay, 1978, pp. 108-122).

6.1.2.2.1. Socio-Cultural values of Iraqi Society

The increasing role of economic developments, according to the political systems adopted, required growth in various government institutions, which in turn led to a significant expansion in the labour sector. This had encouraged the migration from rural to urban areas, which caused up with further growth in the urban sector. In 1977, for example, 63.7% of Iraq's population lived in urban areas, where a fifth of all Iraqis settled in Baghdad alone (Al-Ansari, 1980, p. 334).

One of the characteristics of human societies is their resistance to any unfamiliar change, exposed to. This can be observed in all societies, including the high-end and those degenerate. This is known in sociology as *cultural inertia*. Society's different terms and conditions determine the strength and weakness of this factor (Dawson and Getty, 2008, pp. 583-585). Immigrants' different cultural values affected, in one way or another, people's socio-cultural aspects, habits and daily practices. These changes strengthened, on the other hand, the social isolation among different segments of society. Immigrants, in the perspective of the people of the city, were carrying strange and unacceptable socio-cultural values, habits and rituals which made them adhere to the inherited and sober intellectual heritage. Accordingly, the indigenous population of the city tried to avoid any social contact with new immigrants. As a result, they found themselves in a social and cultural conflict between two contradictory values, inherited and nomadic cultural aspects on the one hand and civilised or, exclusively, modern values on the other hand. Economic and political factors, imposed by the ideological perspective of the ruling party or the system, had a significant impact in determining both poles, in addition to the desire or the tendency of people of the city to accept modern values. As a result of these social changes, social life and social interaction between different categories at the level of the city and the neighbourhood unit began to weaken with increasing social cohesion among family members. The family head and males began increasingly to spend longer periods of time at home than ever before strengthening, therefore, social cohesion and home life. This affected largely the freedom and privacy of the woman and her entire kingdom, thus reducing or shrinking social relations with her neighbours. These factors have led to a change in the concept of the in-between space in contemporary homes, and social flexibility between private, semi-private/public and public spheres. On the neighbourhood level, spatial and physical properties of the gridiron pattern of new residential sectors boosted to a large extent this type of insulation, where the privacy of the family began to be realized by the presence of high walls surrounding residential units or through the front garden that separates the home and the public sphere of the street.

Moreover, people varied in their daily lives, where each social group had specific social behaviour, social and religious rituals and practices. Slum-dwellers, for example, continued using the house and the street, as a spatial extension, in the practice of social rituals in sadness and joy

promoting, thus, inherited socio-cultural aspects. The public sphere of the street, on such occasions, turned into a private family ownership for the performance and completion of these rituals. People of the city, on the other hand, began using specific places outside the limits of the neighbourhood to carry out these ceremonies or events.

6.1.2.2.2. Planning and Architectural Changes in the housing sector

Architecture in the period that could be considered as the throes of the emergence of modern architecture, of the fifties and until the end of the decade, has had a particular impact on the urban landscape of the city of Baghdad and many other major cities. The efficiency of the built environment and its architecture revealed their proper planning principles and environmental protection from any civic violation. This period was mainly dominated by the tendency of individuality in architecture which was far from the public efficiency. In the absence of planning regulations, its architecture was a kind of chaos in urban areas, represented by individualism, more like an orchestra where everyone plays what he likes, bearing in mind that some of the players are first class (Al-Mulla Huwaish, 1988, pp. 30-32).

Some planning and housing properties have referred to as a prelude to the recognition of planning attributes and housing types knowing that some of them were a continuation of the former. Planning in the fifties, in all Iraqi cities, was a kind of municipal practices and individual actions, such as private houses. The work of the municipality of the capital, for example, did not exceed the opening of new streets or providing basic services. After the increase in oil revenues at the beginning of the fifties, these services became more active and new modern neighbourhoods have emerged, as is the case in residential districts surrounding the traditional context of 'al-Kamaliya' and 'al-Mansour' in Baghdad, and 'al-Zohour' in Mousil. In this regard, concerned authorities recognised the crucial need to adopt designed master plans for the current and expected expansion in the housing sector. The council of reconstruction began achieving its request for the preparation of these plans and designs. Three sequential consultants had been chosen to put and develop these designs. Due to the lack of real statistics or surveys, their work concluded to a '*development guide plan*' on the basis of the expected increase of the population of Baghdad, from 700.000 to 1400.000 for the following 20 years till 1974, which did not happen as specified. According to these designs, new residential quarters were designed on the basis of Western and modern principles. Development of the traditional *mahalla* in this period was mainly focused on the city centre, the opening of new streets and the demolition of further units (Al-Ashab, 1974, pp. 401-404).

The philosophy of the first team, worked in Iraq (Doxiades), based on the scale of the human as the basic unit in housing designs and the hierarchy of urban planning which starts, from his point of view, with the human and ends in the city. Fundamental division of houses depended largely on the social structure (size) of the family and its income. Adopted gridiron pattern in the neighbourhood planning was issued by the municipality for the reconstruction of many examples, as is the case in 'al-Thawra city (Sadr)' and many other residential districts in Baghdad, according

to the same designing attributes of Doxiades. The language of Doxiades in urban design relied mainly on the car, as a primary planning unit, and its requirements such as the wide streets, parking places and vast open spaces between residential sectors. These planning categories were of negative impact on the scale and architecture of the house (Figure 6.8). Moreover, each residential sector was developed as a primary housing unit derived from the basic divisions of the gridiron (Al-Mulla Huwaish, 1988, pp. 58-62). Doxiades tried in his concept of providing a ready plan for all contexts, in spite of the diversity of social and cultural norms of each region thus recalling the international style in architecture.

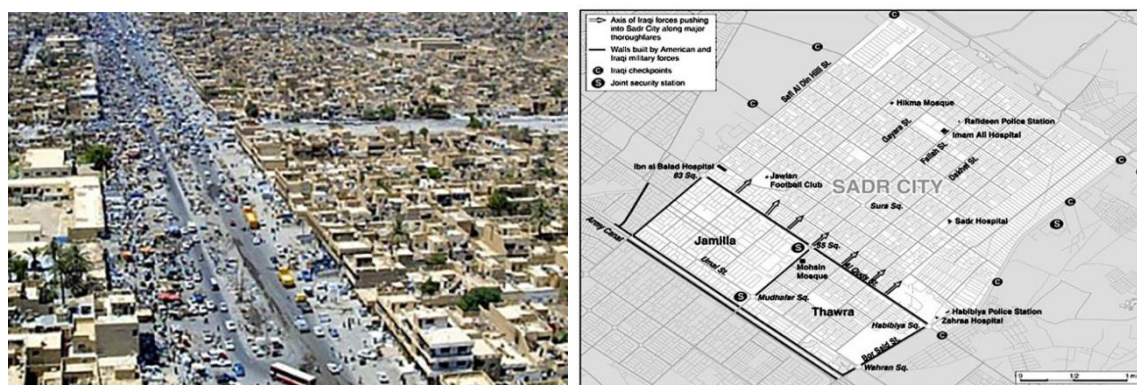


Figure 6.8: Modern and inhuman scale in the designing of Al-Thawra (Sadr) housing sector in Baghdad
(Source: Amanat Al-Aasima, 1985, p. 7)

Specialists, in the early of sixties, realised that both designs of Miniprio (1957) and Doxiades (1959) did not respond to emerging requirements and needs of Iraqis. Therefore, consultants of Polservice Institution in 1965 submitted a new master plan and basic designs for various residential sectors in several areas of Baghdad. Foreign consultants failed in giving accurate designs due to their limited experience and knowledge of the local situation, the nature, values and key factors of Iraqi society. They had no idea of people's socio-cultural aspects, inherited values, rituals and daily practices. On the other hand, designs and plans made subsequently by Iraqi consultants were not realistic, practical or based on real statistical studies. Their plans came far from providing a comprehensive development scheme. Expertise weakness in the Iraqi staff for the preparation of appropriate schemes and plans, which ought to be suitable for the local aspects of Iraqi community, or the development of proper rules and guidelines, led to a direct and, sometimes, unintentional cloning of Western ideas and alien cultural principles and social values. Moreover, knowledge of most of them was derived from Western cultures, in addition to the lack of Iraqi standards and the absence of local authorities or users in the design process (Al-Mulla Huwaish, 1988, pp. 65-66). Therefore, proposed designs were represented largely utopian or fancy concepts, which often fell short of the actual understanding of the local situation and the basic need. Furthermore, the identification of certain principles of the basic scheme and designs was largely determined by the local public administration or due to the impact of the political orientation of the state. This means that any change in the general strategic policy might change the basic designs or the main master plan (Al-Ashab, 1974, pp. 419-420).

Poleservice's consultants, in their designs, suggested the use of vertical residential buildings as a solution to the need in the housing sector. This conceptual attitude had been placed in fact and implemented by the state as a precise proposal to provide a suitable home for each family. Plans were put with no comprehensive studies of social, cultural, environmental or technological properties. Their studies encouraged the increase of social units in housing buildings to 70% against the decrease of separate housing units to 30%. These methods faced, in the near future, many problems because of the change in the social structure of the Iraqi family, which had not been discussed or taken into account during the design process, and the ignorance or neglect of social and cultural values of Iraqi society (Bianca, 2000, pp. 258-260; Al-Mulla Huwaish, 1988, p. 85). In this regard, it can be argued that the evolution towards residential buildings, as methods, in Baghdad went through three main stages. The first represented the beginning of housing expansion in the period after the 1st World War, followed by a period of recession and stagnation in the forties, and thus the beginning of a continuous development and growth in the housing sector in the fifties and the sixties of the last century. The latter phase produced experiences, signs of urbanisation and primary features for multi-story buildings in Baghdad. It referred to a transitional change in the history of architecture, in general, and the architecture of the house, in particular. The government in 1976, under the pressure of people's basic needs and due to its socialist measures and arguments, had adopted a policy of high-rise systems in the construction of residential buildings with no assessment of the social, cultural and environmental impact of this policy, the validity of its methods or compounds and their economic and domestic consequences (Raouf, 1985, p. 378). Evidence revealed that anticipated problems from housing officials and users have occurred. This type of housing form pointed out another crack in the correlation between social factors, the spatial arrangement and physical characteristics of housing in Iraq.

As related to residential patterns, the modern, Western-style, form continued as a dominating pattern in this period. Social and economic changes in addition to improvements in construction techniques in new-designed residential districts encouraged this type. This form consists of one or two levels with a garden in the front and, sometimes, back of the house and flat roofs. It was the main one used in new-implemented districts in addition to that used for those built in the suburbs of the old city centre. Implementation of the latter units led to a host of problems in these contexts, including the expansion in the level of social services and the increase in transport costs, combined with its complexity due to the increasing distance between users' workplaces and home. Modern houses in most residential districts, as al-Yarmouk, al-Andalus, al-Qadisiya and al-Firdous and others in Baghdad, could be classified, according to the master plan, into four main typologies. The first was the single-family house, with one level, whose area ranging between 300-800 m². The second was the semi-detached typology on a large single plot. The third type was a small house (studio), which was designed in contact with the main house, as an annexe or extension, and was built on a portion of the garden or the non-built-up area of the plot. It is usually worked as a separate two-story house. This type came in response to the extended nature and actual need of the Iraqi family to accommodate new families. The fourth type was the multi-storey residential buildings which were built over large areas and accommodated about 7% of the Iraqi

population in 1975. The possibility of expansion in the construction of vertical residential buildings had been confirmed to absorb more than 25% of the population in 2000 (Al-Mulla Huwaish, 1988, p. 90). The natural increase in the population, continuing migration from rural to urban areas, constant degradation of traditional houses and high rehabilitation costs of these contexts were the main reasons behind the growth in the housing sector in Iraq, in all its patterns, during the sixties and the seventies of the last century (Figure 6.9).



Figure 6.9: Al-Yarmouk housing district in Baghdad in the sixties of the last century (Al-Mulla Huwaish, 1988, p. 91)

Spatial and physical properties of modern neighbourhoods in this period shared similar values and organisational principles that can be summarised into four factors. The first is the wide open space penetrating the physical context of the neighbourhood as a result of new transportation's requirements and the space left in front of or around the housing unit. The second factor is the loss of unity, totality and spatial integration between the house and surrounding open spaces or the whole physical fabric. The third is that the continuity of the same housing unit displays a dominant feature in modern residential districts, which led to a kind of monotony especially in the repetition of a specific model on both sides of the same street. The final factor is the negligence of users' concepts, meanings and participation in the scope of planning principles or design features for each of the neighbourhood and the residential unit. Irrational and speculative overview of modern architects, planners and designers was the main catalyst in planning and design decisions and proposals during this period (Bianca, 2000, pp. 248-250).

'*Sarifa*' phenomenon, that mentioned earlier, had grown rapidly as groups and complexes around the city of Baghdad, followed by active civilian and governmental attempts to curb the spread of this phenomenon and to develop appropriate solutions to this problem. Housing projects carried out in this period did not add much to the development of Iraqi architecture, but

remained just fill or quick solutions for basic needs and urgent requirements. They were revealed as an extension to the bad values of popular housing that lacking real design solutions and processes along with the lousy social and health conditions of poor districts (Al-Ashab, 1974, pp. 430-432). The situation can be observed in many of the neighbourhoods that were built in different parts of Baghdad, as is the case with the terraced '1000 houses' project in 'al-Hurriya' in 1957, the detached houses in Karrada, A'adhamiya, Raghiba Khatoun and al-Silaykh in its eastern and western sides. Most of the houses built in these parts belonged to the individual style reflecting the views and values of their residents and far from the social reality or society's values. This type showed some kind of shift towards the adoption of conscious architectural designs in modern housing that expressed different cultural perspective from those used in traditional contexts (Al-Mulla Huwaish, 1988, pp. 128-134). It is necessary to refer to the emergence of living quarters or housing districts on the basis of professional conglomerates or blocks as is the case in the neighbourhood of Engineers or others in different parts of Baghdad. This phenomenon gives an impression in initiating architectural and planning designs and treatments that reflect the social and cultural aspects of each level of the society.

The architecture of the house, popularized in modern residential neighborhoods in the sixties of the last century, was characterized by the re-use of the central room to be more suited as space for living than just being a transitional space, such as that which was common in the covered courtyard house in the thirties and until the end of the fifties. This central space is still called "*Hall*" and expresses the sphere that connects the entrance, from one side, and other rooms, on the other side. These rooms include, in addition to the bedrooms, kitchen, bathroom and toilets, stairs and a small distributing corridor leading to the back garden of the house. Entering this type of houses is through a roofed or, sometimes, unroofed '*Tarma*' or terrace leading to a small entrance acting as a transitional space to both the guest room and the family living space (hall). These two spaces are connected, in many examples, to be used as one large space in specific social occasions and festivities. Large and spacious windows, as well as the horizontal treatments of the elevation, are the main features in the architecture of this model (Figure 6.10). The former treatment reflects the change in the perspective of society towards privacy, its conceptual meaning and social significance which led to opening the main spaces of the house towards the outside in contrast to the introverted nature of the traditional house.



Figure 6.10: Examples of the modern house in the sixties and the seventies of the last century
(Al-Mulla Huwaish, 1988, p. 130)

6.1.2.3. Period III: Saddam Hussein's Regime (1979-2003)

The third temporal subdivision covers a very specific period in the history of Iraq. This period was characterised by a great deal of social, cultural, intellectual, political and economic contradictions and conflicts that affect society and its principles. It reflects the actual change in society's socio-cultural values through the presence of the absolute ruler who controlled forcibly all community's facilities. In his book *Al-Muqaddimah*, Ibn Khaldun argues that the beginning of the destruction of communities can be observed in sharp focus and growing interest of their rulers on urban aspects rather than social life and people's interests (Ibn Khaldun, 2004, pp. 436-438; Al-Wardi, 1965, pp. 309-310). This view contrasts with the vision of scholars who believe that people remember what former rulers did with regard to tangible features of built environments. Otherwise, Ibn Khaldun's argument can be clearly observed through the volume of the projects and developments carried out in this period at all levels. Therefore, we find it necessary to customise a specific historical subdivision to cover the variables of this period.

6.1.2.3.1. Socio-Cultural Factors of Iraqi Society

Political and security standards of the central regime during this period had affected tremendously family's socio-cultural aspects, its home and social life, religious and social rituals and day-to-day practices of its members (Al-Samaraie, 2007, pp. 937-938). Saddam Hussein had adopted a specific powerful model which glorifies and extols terror. He tried through his followers and by a variety of unexpected and unethical ways, in some cases, to interfere in the life of the Iraqi family, its customs, habits and traditions. This intervention affected social relationships between family members and between them and the community. Accordingly, family members were forced to suffer or exercise a kind of social isolation. Iraqi people, under these circumstances, were afraid to communicate each other or using public spaces, such as coffeehouses in the traditional

mahalla (Figure 6.11), due to the fear of the other, and the growing mistrust between the different segments of society. This situation had fostered social cohesion among family members and encouraged or forced, in a more precise word, the male spend more time at home than ever before, thereby enhancing the home life factor instead of the social life of the neighbourhood (Raphaeli, 2007, p. 34).

The distinction between Sunni and Shiite groups in state's various facilities formed a remarkable socio-cultural factor. It has had a significant impact on and led to a major rift in the nature of Iraqi society and everyday life in this period and the subsequent. In a long historical period, and in particular under the leadership of the repressive dictatorship of Saddam Hussein since 1979-2003, Shiite Arabs passed through a difficult life forced them to lay off a lot of their habits, customs, rituals and daily practices. This situation, prior to and during the first period of Saddam's rule, can be observed in people's performance of their religious rites, as on the occasion of the martyrdom of Imam Hussein (PBAH). In this religious occasion, for example, a radical shift in the privacy of different social spaces, of the traditional *mahalla* and the whole urban fabric to perform the appropriate rituals and ceremonies, can be observed and practised (Figure 6.12). Social and private spaces of residential units, on such occasions, turn into public places or open to the public for cooking and sleeping or for the exercise of rituals.



Figure 6.11: The popular *Maqahee* (coffeehouses) in traditional contexts (Al-Husseini, 2015)

Iraq's invasion of Kuwait and economic sanctions of the United Nations, through the nineties and even the fall of the regime in 2003, had tremendous impacts, which grew substantially, on the social and cultural nature of the Iraqi family, albeit in mundane ways. During this period, Iraq had suffered from the massive and comprehensive destruction of all aspects of life, especially its infrastructure and services, which dropped sharply and in turn weakened the quality of life and basic needs of Iraqis (Al-Samaraie, 2007, p. 932). The significant deterioration in the income of the family, compared with the increase in construction costs, pushed the Iraqi family, in some cases, for the sale of their own property and, sometimes, belongings for the purpose of living. Given these circumstances, the individual was forced to live with his parents after marriage, as was the case in the traditional extended family. Iraqis, especially those in rural areas, are still

retaining the concept of the extended family and strong ties between tribe's members to promote tribal organisational factors and strengthen the relationships and bonds, which have become more distinctive and clearer than last. On the other hand, a lot of Bedouin values, during this period, had been neglected or replaced by strange factors socially and, sometimes, morally. Generosity and hospitality were replaced by austerity and greed. This social and cultural change has affected to a large extent on the architecture of the house through, for example, the absence of a separate guest room, which became useless because of the economic situation of households and the deterioration of income, and limited exclusively to the living space. As a result, this period did not witness a perceptible change or evolution in the architecture of the house. However, the central regime continued in the implementation of major projects, which are increasingly destroyed the value of the Iraqi currency.



Figure 6.12: The performance of religious rituals in the traditional and contemporary urban fabric of the city

6.1.2.3.2. Socio-Spatial Development of the House and the neighbourhood

The architecture of the house, in the seventies and the eighties of the last century, was characterised by the large built-up area of the house and spacious interior spaces due to falling construction's costs and rising income's levels of the Iraqi family. These factors had led to the emergence of a new housing pattern which includes a guest room, a family space and an additional internal hall reflecting the economic well-being experienced by the community. Moreover, a large entrance with many spacious annexes such as service rooms and stores, additional social spaces or rooms to enhance the separation of the sexes, the use of the roof in summer times, the height of the outer wall for privacy and other features were the key aspects of this style. These elements began, then, to recede as was evident in the neglect of the roof by using a pitched one reflecting an alien architectural treatment, and the use of iron-barred walls instead of preceding high solid outer walls which weighed heavily on family's privacy. These values vary from one social class to another according to the nature of the environmental context. Moreover, blending social spaces used for both sexes, which has affected the privacy of family members, began to emerge at the end of this stage as a reflection of the impact of the open model in modern architecture.

Accelerated implementation of large and prestigious developments, promoted by the socialist Ba'ath Party since the 1960s and continued in the early eighties of the last century, such as the case with the development project of Haifa Street in 1985, was the result of a political decision or, for example, in preparation for the meeting of non-aligned countries in that period (Figure 6.13). This project precisely was based on planning studies in the context of “*the development of a comprehensive plan of Baghdad 2000*”, according to the master plan of Baghdad in 1973 (Abdul Wahab, 2009, pp. 255-156). A vast area of the traditional context has been destroyed for the construction of this complex. The design of apartments relied heavily on a particular division based on the social structure of certain segments of society. Neither these units nor the whole complex based on a thorough analysis of the social values of the Iraqi family as will be discussed in the following chapter. By establishing new districts and residential complexes for wealthy social groups according to these policies, the poor and immigrants continued inhabiting *systematically politically disadvantaged neighbourhoods*. This led to the emergence of a big crack in the social and cultural factors (Schulz and Banna, 2015, p. 3). Moreover, Gulf War in the early 1990s and UN's economic sanctions confirmed the restriction and inequality in the transformation of Iraqi cities in general.

The nineties did not witness the emergence of a certain pattern in the architecture of home alongside big reductions in the housing sector in spite of the process of allocating residential plots for certain categories of society, such as the case with those accorded to universities' lecturers at the beginning of 1990s. Economic elements and the unstable situation in social, cultural and political factors were the main reasons for this decline.



Figure 6.13: The impact of the implementation of Haifa Street complex on the traditional urban fabric of the city (Source: Amanat Al-Aasima, 1985, p.8)

6.1.3. Phase III: Post-Saddam Iraq (2003-2015)

The final phase of this historical study covers the contemporary period after 2003 until this moment, including the collapse of Saddam Hussein's regime and the entry of US troops and

coalition forces into Iraq. In their propensity, as they argued to achieve stability in Iraq and preserve its social and cultural values, US authorities recalled, as did the British and the Ottoman Turks before them, directly or indirectly Bedouin heritage in Iraqi society through the enrolment of tribes in rebuilding Iraq. Bedouin culture, as many historians and sociologists confirmed, formed or influenced historically by the specific nature of Iraqi society. It represents, at the same time, the bedrock of its social and cultural aspects during this period (Hassan, 2007, pp. 4-5). Values of tribalism, chivalry and raiding, which determined by the concept of hegemony or predominance (*taghalub*), illustrate society's attitude, culture and overriding factors, which currently can be observed and practised. The daily life of the Iraqi people once again reveals the nomadic values in the Iraqi personality and mentality. The individual relies mainly on the power of the tribe, his personal abilities and a strange sense of superiority to; for example, avenge transgressions, especially, in the absence of law or the power of strict rules. Consequently, this period is represented by the major attack and influential dominance of the social and cultural aspects of rural and Bedouin mentality on the nature of Iraqi society against a decline in the civilised mentality. It can be argued that the nature of Iraqi society and its socio-cultural values are the product of decades of struggle, violence and deprivation faced by Iraqi society, particularly in the last three or four decades (Raphaeli, 2007, pp. 33-34).

Iraqis are still bearing in mind the Bedouin culture, and therefore suffering from an intellectual conflict or crisis in the relation between self and society. Their culture reveals the contradictory nature of the Iraqi mentality that boasts, on the one hand, of the great achievements of the long and deep history of civilization, while, on the other hand, people's daily lives reflect violence, discord and a kind of barbarism (Al-Wardi, 2009, p. 275). Iraqis have an apparent propensity to the practice of excessive violence in their social lives and relations with each other. However, they try providing an ideal socio-cultural model by linking or interpreting their behaviour in accordance with Islamic ethics, behaviour and principles. Bedouin elements emphasise the bilateral nature of the Iraqi mentality that has been diagnosed by many historians and sociologists. This factor has a significant impact on social cohesion, relationships and interactions among family members and between them and society as well.

6.1.3.1. The Role of the Family

Contemporary Iraqi family represents the influential organisation in Iraqi society and reflects a relatively coherent organisation or repository for all social, cultural and economic activities. It transmits community's values and standards of behaviour to its members, and offers them, at the same time, social, cultural and economic protection from the bad effects of these aspects. Iraqi family for the time being is far from the extended nature of the traditional form in the exclusive sense. Family members may live separately in a nuclear form, which is the prevalent type, where all share the same aspects and properties of the extended one. However, family members, in this organisation, are still responsible for each other and for the behaviour of each member to preserve and maintain the coherent nature of the Iraqi family. Hierarchical and patriarchal nature

of traditional family is still clearly shown in present-days families, where a father or a senior male is still the main head, and has the full responsibility in the management of various family matters. He manages family's affairs and properties and holds the final decision within the limits of the house, or outside. This small social unit reflects the nature of Iraqi society in miniature, as well as its social, cultural and economic values.

Women, on the other hand, have the main role in maintaining the status of the family. They need, in contemporary situations, to create a kind of compatibility between their homes and work. They need, in contemporary situations, to create a sort of consensus between their homes and work as long as the vast majority of nowadays' women are in the work, and thus spend long hours outside their homes and away from their families' responsibilities. This change is the result of many wars men went through in the 1980s and 1990s of the last century. On the other hand, women need to show full respect to their partners, especially in public. Family honour and respect is mainly related to women's faithfulness, sincerity, humility and modesty. The woman, as other society segments, is exposed to a kind of social, religious and intellectual pressure between what she entirely needs, as a human being, and what society imposes. This kind of contradiction or dual nature greatly influenced the woman's privacy and social values on family and community scale.

6.1.3.2. Architecture of the House and Neighbourhood unit

Urban components of contemporary neighbourhood units are confronting critical changes, crucial decay and distinction due to irresponsible and non-scientific planning policies of decision makers whose social and cultural backgrounds, of most of them, are derived from rural and Bedouin bases (Al-Hasani, 2007, p. 79). Social, cultural and environmental factors are not largely taken as decisive principles in the design of most contemporary residential projects. The majority of these projects rely heavily on political settlements, individual decisions and rapid or illegitimate personal profits. Immoral standards are the natural result of a long period of deprivation, destitution and isolation from the outside world, as well as the impact of the three wars, Iraqi society faced since 1980. Political and economic factors have played a prominent role and have greatly affected the majority of redevelopment projects in Iraq since 2003 (Raphaeli, 2007, p. 34).

The architecture of the contemporary house reflects above-mentioned unstable socio-cultural values and the dualism in the Iraqi mentality. These aspects are reflected by and embodied in the spatial arrangement of different social spaces of the house and the neighbourhood (Al-Wardi, 2009, pp. 285-286; Raphaeli, 2007, p. 33). The modern villa type is the prevailing style of the homes during the period after 2003. The main reasons for the emergence and development of this model are the rise of the family income and increase the liquidity of the individual, opening the country to the outside world, grants facilities and predecessors offered by banks for various construction purposes and free trade for building materials or other domestic elements. Due to these reasons, a broad movement in the field of real estate and the great tendency of the family to the demolition of existing homes to build new, modern units instead are the main features of

this stage. The main emphasis of the Iraqi family is the building of large social spaces revealing its lifestyle and social status, and the wide openness to the outside, which has a negative impact on the family's privacy. The last treatment represents significantly the dual nature of the Iraqi mentality when it, on the one hand, glorifies traditional coherent socio-cultural factors and Islamic determinants, beliefs and principles, while, on the other hand, breaks these norms and inherited aspects in the architecture of their housing units. What can be seen in the architecture of this pattern is the great focus on the use of new building materials, at home and abroad, without any consideration of the social, cultural and environmental impact of these materials. The elevation becomes imbued with motifs and decorations that do not refer to any social or cultural basis and, at the same time, far from tradition. It is necessary to note that a large proportion of these homes have been designed by people who have nothing to do with architecture or have no idea about the impact of these factors on the spatial and physical arrangement of the house. Accordingly, their designs represent mostly blind manipulation of forms and masses accredited heavily on non-functional solutions (Figure 6.14).

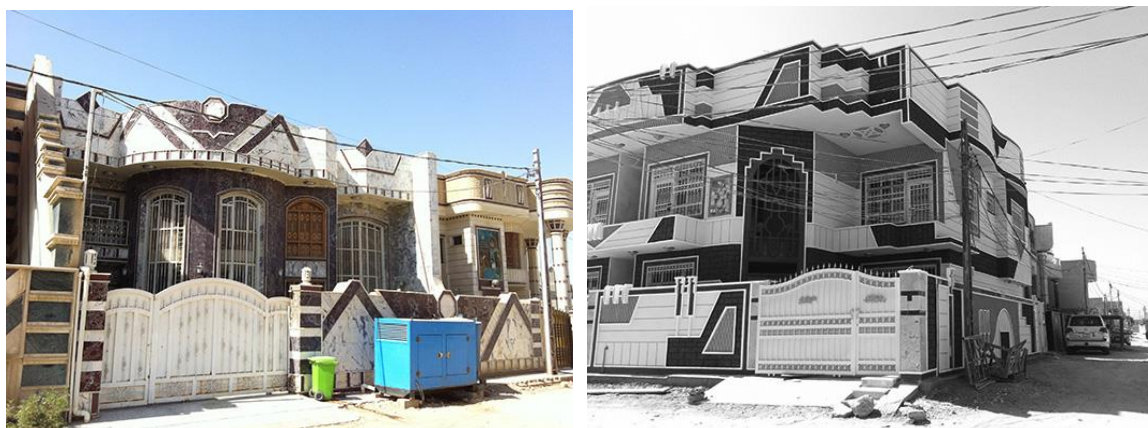


Figure 6.14: Examples of the architecture of the house after 2003.

Criteria adopted in the design, planning and construction of new residential sectors all over Iraq are far from scientific bases, functional settings, environmental considerations and socio-cultural values. This can be clearly observed in the case of the housing project in the south of Hilla (Figure 6.15), which was designed and built over a huge area. This complex includes two sets of residential buildings with three and four levels. It was designed according to the architect's view without any participation or intervention of users, who previously unidentified. Each level includes two housing units with a central staircase or vertical circulation and a small area, as a distributor in the centre of each level. Each apartment consists of many social spaces, which are arranged on either side of a long corridor and open directly to the outside through wide windows without taking into account the environmental impact of the Iraqi severe climate. Windows of opposite buildings are facing each other with no respect to the required degree of privacy for each family. The complex is surrounded by a high iron fence with one major gateway for the entry of people and vehicles revealing the predominant feature of new gated residential districts. This phenomenon recalls ostensibly the social, cultural and defensible values of the traditional gated

mahalla, but the unstable security situation society is going through during this period, is the main reason behind this phenomenon. Neighbourhood units for the time being are largely hidden behind high concrete walls and dislocated from each other and from the city as well (Schulz and Banna, 2015, p. 4). The project and alike, all over the country after 2003, indicate the total absence of planning strategies and processes to deal with the socio-cultural aspects of Iraqi society or, at least, to develop appropriate solutions to environmental problems to create a sustainable environment.



Figure 6.15: New residential district after 2003 in the city of Hilla-Iraq showing the spatial arrangement of different social spaces.

Synthesis

A historical study of housing types in relation to society's developments within a specified period of time is necessary to find out how people's relations with the surrounding built environment have been achieved and developed in terms of individual's social, cultural and behavioural meanings attributed to the house. It clarifies the factors that determine the architectural response to people's social and cultural values and restrictions. This leads the study to provide a systematic analysis of the socio-spatial mutual connections related to the design, use and architecture of the home that supports our inquiries in the development of the built environment.

This chapter has discussed the historical development of Iraqi society, and how changes in society's socio-cultural aspects and daily practices can affect the structure of the house. It covers

three historical phases with all their transitional periods. It sheds light on the evolution of the house, from the traditional courtyard one, which dominated the first phase, to the contemporary villa model. This study covers largely the confined period between 1869 AD and the current time. The former represents mainly the historical transitional point to which most Iraqi traditional houses dated back. It expresses the beginning of real change in the city's urban environment. Political, economic and environmental factors, which affect the spatial and physical properties of the built environment through the passage of a specified period, have been mentioned as being the dominant factors in the spatial and physical organisation of the built and home environment. Last restrictions have a significant impact on the evolution of the home and building types used to solve housing needs and problems. Many social and cultural factors that have been mentioned here and in previous chapters will be the basis on which this thesis will depend in its empirical study.

CHAPTER VII

THE HOME AND '*MAHALLA*' IN A SOCIO-SPATIAL ANALYSIS

Introduction:

This chapter will investigate social values, cultural norms and the spatial organisation of private and public spaces of the traditional *mahalla* in general and Kadhimiya in particular as it shares similar principles with other parts of the city of Baghdad and other Iraqi cities. Many case studies from other traditional contexts have been chosen and analysed due to several political and safety reasons, Iraqi society is confronting for the time being, which formed a barrier in the evolution of the empirical study. The study will try to interpret the social practices and procedures in the dynamic modelling of architectural space and physical structure of the home and the *mahalla*. It will demonstrate the impact of these factors on the morphological characteristics of the built environment. Each social, cultural and religious event will be linked to its architectural expression, spatial organisation and physical structure on the scope of both the private and public realms at home and *mahalla* respectively. The study will reflect the internal interplay between the individual and the surrounding environment, revealing the evolution of space with respect to the change in society's socio-cultural values through the previously specified periods. Because of the complex nature of Iraqi society and the various factors that affect the values, the study will reveal the effects of the daily life and rituals in drawing the whole perspective of traditional tissue on the home and the *mahalla*. This image will be obtained through discussing people's interactions with each other and their impact on private/public spheres. Therefore, the socio-spatial approach will be relied upon in the analysis of these relations. The study covers the social structure of the family, and how the change in its cultural order detects the organisation of space through the in-depth analysis of the nature of the Iraqi family.

The aim of this study is to understand how social procedures, cultural criteria and religious practices affect the architectural development of the house, as a spatial context, across three successive historical phases. The results will be described and conceived in socio-spatial and architectural expressions. Social interactions and relationships between people and families within the boundaries of the *mahalla* are the main factors in determining its whole spatial and physical attributes. As previously mentioned, these relations were affected by nomadic and tribal values due to the migration flooded into the city of Baghdad and its old contexts, especially at the turn of the 20th century. This situation has affected, over a wide range, the socio-cultural values and the cohesion of the social structure of the locality. Despite this, a sense of community or belonging to the *mahalla* looks more strength and clarity in most interviewees, especially among those who have spent most of their lives in such contexts. *Methodologically* speaking, the study relies on qualitative analysis to investigate the social and cultural issues across the three analytical parts of this chapter, and will be considered the main methodological approach. Social and cultural properties dominating the morphological organisation of the *mahalla* during the 19th and the 20th century have been used as influential sources in building socio-spatial study. Archival records covering social rituals in joy and sorrow, cultural events, religious practices and incidents and people's daily activities and relations are considered the leading suppliers of information. Numerical analysis of the *mahalla* and its housing units, which are the outcome of many scholarly

studies such as the study of Dr. Khalis Al-Ashab and Al-Mulla Huwaish instead of going into the internal social relations between family members, had failed to describe or provide a full perspective of the social realm of the house and the *mahalla*. This failure is due to the fact that internal social actions of family members and users of the community, such as sleeping, cooking and quarrels between neighbours, for example, were considered symbols of special issues must be protected as sacred scopes that cannot be addressed or compromised. To avoid this gap, the researcher resided in such contexts for a sufficient period helped him to build good relations with *mahalla*'s residents and users for the purpose of obtaining a complete picture of the social sphere of the locality. At the same time, the researcher had spent a long period of his childhood in such environments which made him more aware of their nature and characteristics.

Other cases from different residential contexts in the city of Baghdad and other parts of Iraq will be analysed and discussed to achieve a kind of comparison between the *mahalla* and new neighbourhoods in relation to the impact of socio-cultural factors and everyday life in the spatial configuration of the house and the *mahalla*. Moreover, identity, tradition and sustainability will be addressed with respect to each context to find out how these factors have been affected by changes in users' socio-cultural aspects and daily practices through in-depth interviews with inhabitants (if possible), users, architects, planners and stakeholders. In this way, the study will cover research inquiries that have been identified in the fourth quarter. This analysis will also take into account users of residential buildings, as is the case in Haifa Street's residential complex, to conclude how changes in housing patterns affect the social standards of the population and their daily lives. It will give an overview of the spatial development of the house by pointing to the change in the social aspects and cultural values, and the possibility or necessity of re-employing these aspects in contemporary developments in order to create a sustainable environment.

After the analysis and classification of the historical development of selected case studies, discussing the impact of socio-cultural factors on the spatial arrangement of the built environment for each period will be followed to find out how the family and the society manifested in each context. Accordingly, this chapter will be divided into three main parts reflecting the temporal phases, have been addressed previously. Considering research structure, socio-cultural factors and daily practices, that affecting community's public domains, will be analysed before moving to the private sphere of the house. Between these domains, many social principles, customs and traditions will be taken into account to approach their impact on the spatial organisation of the private domain of the house.

7.1. Part I: Socio-Spatial Analysis for the Home and *Mahalla* (1869-1918)

The reign of Midhat Pasha (1869-1873) was identified as an influential period in the modern history of Baghdad. It presented the radical effects of the many changes, occurred during this period, on people's social values and city's spatial issues. These effects pointed out how modern values of Iraqi society began to be formed. Changes made by this ruler and the following, Nadhim Pasha, attacked the traditional *mahalla* in general through the demolition of many parts of the city

and its surrounding wall in order to accomplish these changes. They attacked, consequently, the privacy of Iraqi society, its security and everyday life. These changes had had a significant impact on the sacred place of the family, after users' impressions, when their borders were broken socially, culturally, spatially and physically.

Steps towards modernity, particularly after the 1st World War, the British Mandate period and the subsequent decades had witnessed the imposition of many modern regulations in the housing sector of new neighbourhoods, such as the emergence of a new system of housing production. Thanks to Dr. Ali Hussein Al-wardi for his detailed analysis and investigation of the nature of Iraqi society and the everyday life of its actors in traditional contexts during this period and following transitional phases. In addition to the architectural survey of some homes, this study will shade light on the social values and spatial settings for each element with regard to the home and the *mahalla*. The focus will be on the morphological changes of the city of Kadhimiya during this period, as an outstanding exemplar of traditional contexts, to configure a clear image of the impact of the physical and spatial changes in social life and daily practice to its users. This district has been selected due to the amount of archival records, scholarly studies and development projects, which included and covered this region. At the same time, it provides a comprehensive and integral example of the traditional Islamic environment, in which social and cultural factors as well as religious principles, manifested in the shrine of the two Imams, played an important role in its formation. Prior to entering into this study, it is necessary to give an overview of the physical changes experienced by the city during this period and the subsequent temporal phases and their effects on the spatial organisation of its traditional fabric and home.

7.1.1. Kadhimiya City; physical Form and Spatial Development

Kadhimiya city itself is almost circular shape with Kadhimayn shrine which dominates its centre and forms its social, cultural and functional life. It derived its name from the shrine of Imam Musa Al-Kadhim (PBUH), revered descendant of the prophet Mohammad (PBUH), who died and was buried in this place in 800 AD. The city attracts annually Muslims and pilgrims from other parts of Iraq, the Middle East and the World as well, especially from Persia. It is a small and old town, about one kilometre in diameter, which withstood against various urban changes relating to the opening of new streets that penetrate its old fabric and the creation of new buildings with architectural features different from what was present, as well as social and economic problems that have affected its traditional life and urban environment. The reasons behind this were its sustained autonomy, spatial location and physical isolation from the rest of Baghdad. It was considered as one of the four historical districts, including the Rusafa centre, Kadhimiya centre on the eastern side of the Tigris River, the centre of Al-Karkh and the historic centre of Al-A'dhamiya (Amanat Al-Asima, 1980, p. 3). These centres still represent, to some extent, the original features of traditional architecture in Baghdad. The importance attributed to the city came as the only site recommended by UNESCO to be maintained, according to its recommendations on the historical sites in the city of Baghdad. City in the morphological composition consists of four *mahallas*,

including *Al-Tell*, *Qattana*, *Dabagh-khana* and *shiyoukh*. The latter is the largest and was named according to its first settlers from the sheikhs of the Arabic *Tay's* clan. There are many other small *mahallas*, which were formed during the first third of the 20th century. Some of them, due to their proximity, followed the main *mahallas* (Al-Rahman, 2014) (Figure 7.1).



Figure 7.1: Traditional *mahallas* in the city of Kadhimiya (Source: Fethi, 1977, p. 286)

The existence of the shrine demonstrates the main factor in urban planning and a pivotal point for its expansion and development, reflecting the importance of the Friday Mosque in other traditional contexts (Al-Chalabi, 1984, p. 12) (Figure 7.2). The city entered its modern phase, after a long isolation, around the year 1869 AD when the Ottoman ruler, Midhat Pasha, first set up the tram service, linking the city with the Karkh, with its terminal building located 200 metres to the south-west of the mausoleum. This event had a dominant effect on the functional characteristics of the city where commercial buildings proliferated along the southern parts of the traditional core. Markets, such as the *AstarAbadi suq*, and many khans, as the *Kabuli* and *Farhan* khans, were established. In 1884, a bridge of boats had been built linking the city with the A'adhamiya on the other side of the Tigris River. This bridge, which was docked few hundred metres down the Tigris River and stayed closer to the textile factory of Fatah Pasha (built in 1926), was replaced by a new bridge (Aima Bridge) (Fethi, 1977, p. 288). Most of these changes did not affect the traditional core as long as their functional and spatial effects were marginal and on the outskirts but had led to a rapid increase in the number of population, especially around the shrine. The urban fabric around the shrine continued in a cohesive and coherent pattern and did not undergo major changes. The main focus during this period was on the functional characteristics of the

housing units rather than formal features. Traditional courtyard house, which represents the main result of an ancient and inherited civilisation, was continued as the prevailing typology in the period.



Figure 7.2: The Shrine of Imam Kadhim (PBUH) surrounded by the traditional urban fabric of *mahallas*
(Source: Golubeva, 2011, p. 3)

During the second phase, which was a period of increased expansion of the city, many wide streets; including *Qibla* Street (22 m. wide), *Sharif Al-Radhi* Street (12 m. wide) in 1940s, *Bab Al-Dirwaza* Street (12 m. wide) and *Zahra'a* Street (30 m. wide) in 1950s, had been erected following the demolition of a large part of the traditional tissue. These actions had led to the dismantling and distortion of the urban fabric of the city and its main *mahallas* (especially the *shiyoukh* and *Qattana*). Moreover, they led to a rapid and non-programmed spread of commercial functions, which became the main catalyst controlling the use of lands on both sides of these streets. These changes became more prone to attract commercial and other forms of modern facilities. These procedures accompanied by the implementation of a variety of modern commercial buildings in a non-sympathetic form to their surroundings. This forced the residents of the old centre, especially wealthy families, to leave their homes and move into new districts outside the limits of the traditional context (Figure 7.3.).

In 1967 and 1974, Polservice introduced its proposal to implement a wide street around the shrine, which had a bad impact on the surrounding old tissue. This procedure made the shrine stood in a vacant area surrounded by traditional houses from the north, and modern multi-storey blocks to the south. Moreover, the creation of an underground garage located next to the mosque, according to the study of the British APP office, led to the fall of a number of neighbouring buildings. These changes in addition to heavy immigration from outside the city and other parts of the country towards the Kadhimiya led to a rapid deterioration of the technical condition of its buildings. According to Polservice's surveys in 1973, the city's population stood at 28.000. These

estimates had been built on a sample of 10%, giving an average density of population of about 482 people per hectare and an occupancy rate of 2.26 persons per room. However, censuses showed, in 1947 and 1965, an increase in population from 38.000 to 45.000 respectively. The former survey revealed that housing plots in the historical core varied in size between 50-150 sq. m. whereas the majority of these houses were owned by the private. The study revealed, moreover, that the majority of families belonged to the low-order social class who had a maximum monthly income of up to about 50 Iraqi dinars (Amanat Al-Assima, 1980, p. 4).



Figure 7.3: Planning proposals for Old Kadhimiya by Polservice, 1973 (Source: Fethi, 1977, p. 305)

The disastrous action came after 2003 when a new redevelopment project was confirmed. The project, when completed, will lead to the entire destruction and demolition of the traditional core of the city for the purpose of expanding the yard (*sahn*) of the shrine. Regrettably, many architects in the design firm are Iraqis and have extensive knowledge and a clear idea of the importance of this region historically, socially and culturally. But money, as we did not find any other excuse, plays an important role in people's social, cultural and intellectual principles and ethics (Figures 7.4).



Figure 7.4: (Left) Existing urban fabric of Kadhimiya with highlighted historical buildings; (Right) Master plan for the new development project of Kadhimiya (Source: Golubeva, 2011, pp. 3-5)

7.1.2. Physical Properties of the Community

Studying the physical properties of the context of Kadhimiya recalls many organisational principles of the traditional *mahalla*. They reflect how daily practices, underlying habits and customs, inherent religious aspects and ingrained social activities and rituals formed its spontaneous built form. They prove, moreover, how local patterns can be integrated and interacted with physical forms and architectural methods. This model accommodates the specific living conditions that refer to natural attributes of the whole built environment and social values of its actors. It refers to mutual social relations and everyday practices and corresponds to significant socio-cultural and religious concerns of the family.

The shrine, as the prevailing religious element, integrated with the social and cultural life of the community and spatial characteristics of the surrounding context in a coherent form. Sacred factors of the shrine spread over the entire built environment and greatly inspire its urban fabric (Figure 7.5). This form did not disturb the continuous and interrelated relations between timeless values of the centre and mundane aspects of the *mahalla*. This element could be clearly and visibly observed and illustrated by the spontaneous organisation of the alleys and spaces from the most public of shrine's central yard to the utmost sacred and private of the individual home. This type of arrangement provided a high degree and comprehensive protection of private and sacred values, norms and customs to home. The four *mahallas* were integrated on a solid regulatory basis, forming a physical belt surrounding the central nucleus. Their physical arrangement reflects, to a large extent, the architecture of the house, where each space, with its different social and cultural norms and traditions, opens to the public central core, represented by the *howsh*, and closes off to the outside world through the presence of the surrounding wall. Each space within this organisation defines and identifies a particular social structure. Residential units within this urban fabric are identical and specific to family members. Residents use to live together with the lack of any kind of social inequality. Corridors between social units vary in size from narrow, and

sometimes dead-end, alleys to wider thoroughfares, open to the central public space in an organic, winding and sequential order.



Figure 7.5: The Traditional Urban Fabric of the City of Kadhimiya in 1930 (Source: Abraham, 2008, p. 86)

7.1.3. The Social Structure of the Community

The organisation of social factors, cultural norms and traditions within the traditional context was politically ordered and achieved by many notable members away from the interference of the central government. Society's administrative order revealed some similarities in other traditional cities of the Arab world. The local community of the *mahalla* appointed a leadership, or sheikh, of a high social status to occupy a specific position in the social and political structure of society. This person should be honoured and respected in local public gatherings and by the governing authority as well. His primary responsibility had been determined in solving internal conflicts among *mahalla's* members or between them and other communities through his leadership of the talks with others or, in some cases, his function a mediator between the community and the Governor. It covered, moreover, settling down any conflict between users or inhabitants and, on certain occasions, expelling unwanted persons who might affect the social rights of their neighbours and peace in the *mahalla*. He obtained his nobility and seniority from his social position and ability to protect and preserve his people. This person had a social and religious knowledge by which he could organise *mahalla's* matters and daily affairs. He acted as the local ruler resembling community's governmental system (Abdelmonem, 2015, p. 178).

The other mediators in community's social structure were the *Ulama'a* (scholars), whose responsibilities focused on the supervision of the people and protect the public's interests against the unacceptable referees' resolutions. Each of them occupied a key role in the maintenance of public order. As far as could be ascertained from local and general sources related to Iraqi cities, this situation was in the field of religious officials and ordinarily nominated by the Supreme religious authority in Najaf as a representative of authority in the city of Kadhimiya. Moreover, he held the position of the Imam of Juma'a (the prayer leader). His status was more in contact with people so that he played the role of a mediator in resolving problems between the ruler and the

ruled. More importantly, the *Ulama'a* had a major role in mobilising people in favour of or against referees with respect to emerging social and political issues and conflicts. Therefore, their houses were usually located close to the shrine and were accessible to people even from outside the community. Kadhimiya city was characterised by embracing a large number of scholars who had had a significant role in determining governmental policy in the history of Iraq during this period and the first half of the 20th century such as the great religious scholar, 'Mahdi Al-Khalisy', who stood firmly in regard to the issue of the Iraqi-English Treaty, and A'l Yassin religious family, which was known due to its social and religious status, and many others. In the *Qattana* district, there is a small *mahalla*, called '*Fadhwat A'l Yassin*' which belongs or refers to the latter family.

The *futuwwat* (*shaqawat*) were other members in the social structure of the community. They were appointed as community's protectors against intruders or other communities. They usually kept watch over the security of the *mahalla*, and constituted largely of young members to defend locality's security and peace. The strength of each *mahalla* was measured by the strength of its protectors. In the meantime, all *shaqawat* stood, in serious conflicts, together against other communities outside the city, as the embodiment of the concept of tribal fanaticism, in accordance with "*My brother and I against my cousin and I and my cousin against the stranger*" [18.11.14].

The *Mahalla* and its social structure continued representing the basic political and administrative component and the primary social order at the first half of the 20th century in Baghdad and most Iraq's cities. People accepted traditional structures because of government's failure in building effective structures at the local level. The reliance on traditional norms and rules was not only understandable but also relatively logical, especially when there was no other option. In the case of state's failure in improving individuals' daily life, it was natural to continue their lives and daily practices, according to special structures and rules. The absence of the state did not mean at all the lack of political and social organisation at the local level. For many centuries, traditional structures, including regular and irregular, continued playing a prominent role in the organisation of social life of individuals. Application of decentralisation and strengthening of local governance were largely associated with the presence of traditional authorities (Lutz and Linder, 2004, pp. 3-4). Many interviewees from Kadhimiya community and other parts of Iraq are still with proud remembering their sheikhs, *Ulama'a* and *shaqawat* and are interested in listing stories about their role in maintaining the social and cultural principles of the whole community.

In view of the above facts, it can be argued that the traditional administrative system was a community-based one which heavily relied on the dominant role of community members rather than the personal individual in reference to the ruling authority. Organisational pattern of community affairs mainly based on the concept of "*perceived homogeneity and identity*", that embodying the internal structure of self-government or autonomy. The core function of its internal factors and agents was the result of many social, cultural and political conditions, set by the community for a long time, leading to a unified society, and mutual assistance between them on the basis of its nature and professional affiliations (Alizadeh, 2005, pp. 242-243). Community organising reflects, in essence, an integrated and invisible society where social factors, such as

neighbourliness, chivalry, brotherhood and favouring others, had played a significant role in peoples' self-reliance policy. This concept was argued by Rapoport (1977, p. 257) as; "*where neighbouring is important, different forms of [internal] cooperation may emerge than in areas where membership in formal organisations is a substitute*". From this view, people were first directed, in solving their disputes, to *mahalla's* senior figures, the *Ulama'a* or imam of the mosque and eventually Sheikh as the most outstanding personality in the social structure.

To support the views mentioned above, and particularly how people regulated their affairs and disputes that might arise as a result of discordant views, we can look to interviewees' accounts:

"I had not experienced or heard, in all the sixty years I had lived in the *mahalla*, any dispute between its members concerning anything relating, particularly, to your speciality and interests in buildings or any other subject without being solved internally between us or our elders. We were all considered as one family and our social upbringing and ethics did not allow us to say any inappropriate word towards our neighbours" [12.9.14].

"A curious family about the community of Kadhimiya came and lived on the outskirts of the Qattana *mahalla*. After a while, neighbours began to complain about their inappropriate behaviour and discovered that this family was with a bad reputation and did not know what the meaning of the neighbourliness and its ethics. My father and elders of high social status families gathered in the house of the Sheikh and decided to force this family to find another place and leave the *mahalla* after warning them several times by the Mukhtar. They actually moved after a period to the Fadhil *mahalla* outside the city of Kadhimiya. The reputation of any family within the *mahalla* affects the reputation of the entire community. At the same time, old families knew each other very well and lived as close relatives that could not accept anything affecting their and the *mahalla's* reputation" [11.9.14].

7.1.4. Socio-Spatial Organisation of the Mahalla

After analysis of the socio-cultural issues and social structure of the community of Kadhimiya, the study will go ahead with the discussion of the spatial organisation and morphology of the city in the context of a social-spatial analysis. The social structure shows a harmonious pattern with no clear difference between social levels, where wealthy families, merchants, people from low social class and servants live together in mutual relations within the confines of the *mahalla*. The presence of the poor, according to the specifications and standards of Islamic morality, should not be located or unacceptable. Within these contexts, they live sometimes in places paid by the wealthy under the supervision of the sheikh and the *Ulama'a*. Moreover, Zakat funds, which are, according to the principles of Islamic law, a legitimate imposition on the wealthy, are clustered at the religious authority, which in turn distributes part of this money to the poor and needy to cover part of their expenses. Jewish and Christians, according to the social standards of the whole community, have also their own places and live in complementary relations with Muslims. Their

social aspects, cultural values and religious rituals are also respected by Muslims and are subject to the same treatment by the local authority.

In the city of Kadhimiya, the shrine, with its geometrical form, represents an important element in uniting traditional quarters. It reflects the place that can be used by the public under any circumstances. This core reveals its focus on the concept of the centre and its role in the integration of the currents of life. The public space of the centre was wrapped by a group of public buildings, markets and owners of trade and industry as well as an integrated network of alleys. The first band of houses surrounding the shrine included the homes of sheikhs, *Ulama'a* and scholars, traders and supervisors and servants of the holy shrine. Notable families usually stationed around the shrine, in distinctive homes, followed by another band, wrapped around the first one, but on an irregular basis, comprising popular homes to the public. This section punctuated by foreign families of the Persians, Indians, Turks and Afghans who, with the passage of time, began to melt in the social crucible of the surrounding environment, and became part of the community. Each of these groups had specific alleys (*Darabin* or *Aziqqa*) and nodes their homes gathered around and took their names. They had their specific social values and cultural factors which were respected by Kadhimiya society. This pattern revealed the existence of an organised social system that imposing order on the spatial organisation of the built environment. This coherent pattern was linked by a network of streets which range in size from the wide thoroughfares, alleyways and finally the narrow alleys (*Aziqqa*) characterising respectively the social aspects of the public, the semi-public and the semi-private through close neighbours or relatives. The latter was a widespread form where the standards of neighbourliness, individuality, social isolation and gender segregation could be realised and embodied in a rationally organised structure. It expresses, as Morris (1994, p. 389) argued, *the basic unit in the self-policy nature of the Islamic and traditional city*. Facing away from the public sphere of the main thoroughfares, this pattern gave a kind of comfort, concord, peace and security to its users and the population, especially women during their gatherings and social interactions. It reflects the confined area, surrounded by neighbours, where women can sit freely in front of their homes, especially in families of low class while their children play in the alley. This kind of transformation from the public to the private through semi-public/private spaces reflects to some extent *the changes of possession, of territory, of control and behaviour* (Lawson, 2001, p. 12).

Spatial organisation of Kadhimiya and most Iraqi traditional contexts reflects largely an integrated socio-cultural system and active everyday life. Organic arrangement recalls many embedded meanings where social life, as Norberg-Schulz (2000, p. 31) argued, *implies quality of place*. This structure, with the tri-fold pattern of spaces and movement systems, was not just “a tangle of blocks badly ventilated by a labyrinth of twisted alleys and dark courts” (Falahat, 2013, p. 45), but was a correlated tissue of habits, norms, conventions, traditions, daily practices and rituals imprinted on the built environment. Physical and spatial modernising changes, described previously, broke the interrelated nature of this organisation, resulting in a significant impact on the social and cultural nature of society. Social-spatial collapse can be observed dramatically after receiving the city an astonishing number of immigrants from different parts of Iraq with all what

they carried of social aspects, cultural values, norms, traditions, and tribal or clan affiliations. At the outset, they dwelt city's outskirts and then penetrated into the old fabric. New names and families began to appear in the Kadhimiya community. Their social influence increased, because of their wealth, to the extent that they began jostling to occupy prestigious positions in society, as the role of Sheikh, as was the case with Mr. Ja'far Atiffa's desire or attempt to take over this role in order to solve the conflict between Kadhimiya and Najaf in 1929. Some heads of the community objected as Ja'far Atiffa, according to their views, "*was rich and wealthy but had no clan or strong family that could bolster him*" (Al-Wardi, 2009, p. 190).

Economic factors, as a result of the penetration of business functions in the traditional heart of the city, gradually became hardwired largely on the scene the city as the determinants of the nature of social relationships and daily interactions. On the other hand, the role of the sheikhs, *Ulama'a* and *shaqawat* (*mahalla's* protectors) seemed to fade in the midst of immigrants' link with their specific tribal heads and sheikhs. Belonging to different tribal compositions led to the emergence of a kind of social conflict in the *mahalla* itself. The word '*shroggee*', (whatever its true meaning is), or 'outboard' is still heard and repeated in describing many people or families in the community of Kadhimiya and other parts of Baghdad as an expression of their lack of belonging to the community or are just outsiders and intruders. As a result, indigenous families, especially the wealthy, had to avoid any involvement in any social or cultural conflict with newcomers or to escape from the old city to live in new districts outside the traditional core.

A large part of interviewees, especially the elderly, feel that the traditional system of the city, before these changes, was the best in all respects, especially with regard to social, cultural and religious factors. Others emphasised that the city had lost its identity in the midst of social changes in spite of the presence of very little of its features at the moment. In an interview with a university lecturer, he stressed that:

"Identity of the city and its sustainability are not only in its physical components and appearance, but in its social and cultural aspects which granted life and activity. When the city lost these factors, physical forms became dead and free of spirit or essence which gives it life. So, I think that the sustainability of the traditional Kadhimiya is in its peoples' social relations, cultural values and their daily practices which have evolved over long periods and on the basis of concrete social, cultural, environmental, political and religious factors" [13.3.15].

7.1.5. Islam as Cultural Ideology

Islam represents an integrated cultural system that setting great emphasis on the collective life. It has proved, through its distinctive political, social and cultural system and the continuity of its principles, elements and rituals, a high degree of durability and endurance (El-Gowhary, 2005, p. 19). *Shari'a*, which displays the Islamic laws, embodies an important tool in safeguarding Islamic principles, and to ensure the cultural and religious unity. '*Unite de doctrine*' is crucial to the achievement of an Islamic cultural cohesion in a rapidly changing world. The main sources of

these laws, in the vicinity of Kadhimiya, are the "Quran" (holy book of Islam), sayings of the Prophet (*Ahadith*) and finally sayings of the prophetic strain of *Ahlulbait* (PBUT). In the absence of a direct reference, comes the role of religious leaders (*Ulama'a*), who hold the degree of diligence (*Ijtihad*), in giving the right decision for all issues depending on former sources. They take the responsibility in building the constitution of Islamic law and its application in daily life through their high knowledge in Qur'anic laws and social life of the community. Islamic laws (*Shari'a*) represent religious and ideological recipes originated from society's social and cultural values as well as live experiences. Islam, as Nasser Rabbat emphasised in (2012, p. 15), is an integral part of the cognitive, social and cultural system. The main concern is to promote and strengthen the perfect form of human behaviour individually and collectively, and to avoid economic and social conflicts. It shows a complete system of human life and behaviour, including the founding of morality that is very ritualistic (Bianca, 1987, pp. 26-27). Accordingly, social customs and cultural norms become effective standards in the formulation of the specific identity of the whole community.

Islamic laws are used as essential tools in clarifying, justifying and promoting unity between religious and secular issues. This system strengthens the role of the *Ulama'a* and sheikhs in rolling the everyday life of the community. The religious and cultural order affects human habits, customs and corresponding social values and structure. These factors are embodied in a specific spatial arrangement, spontaneous urban morphology and distinct architectural details that formed the entire built environment. The strength of living patterns displays in their effective social and cultural implications for Islam, which is expressed through the urgent need of a particular social institution (Bianca, 1987, p. 29) that revealing different matters of society vis-a-vis the ruler or other residential districts. These formal institutions are represented by the judge (Qadhi), *ulama'a*, sheikhs and prominent figures from the large clans or ethnic groups, whose roles are clearly impressive in clarifying, simplifying and solving various social and daily struggles. They have achieved and maintained a self-regulating internal balance through a set of implicit rules and conventions known and accepted by everyone.

Islam introduced *Shari'a* as the prevailing law in the organisation of social life in traditional societies, in response to evolving circumstances, in a consistent manner with supreme Islamic principles. Individuals' participation, in response to trusted members, for managing community's affairs within the framework of a comprehensive consensus is a key factor in achieving a unified community where each member knows his rights and duties. The result, reached by the study of the nature of Iraqi society according to scholarly studies of sociologists and interviews with many historians, lecturers and specialists in Iraqi society as well as an actual observation and analysis of Iraqi's social, intellectual and behavioural actions, affirmed that religion, as ideologies, practices and rituals, is not always the main factor that determines the organisation of Iraq's traditional communities as far as determined by the force of law and its strict applications. The first is greatly 'used' depending on Iraqis' interests and how they benefit from it in addition to the current pace of the central government or the general atmosphere in the country. In this regard, clerics warn often Muslims from, for example, being stolen in the case of visiting the holy places to perform Islamic rites or to practice their religious rituals. Consequently, the presence of a sober and strong social

structure is important in the regulation of social relations and interactions between the various individuals and community groups.

7.1.6. Sacred Rituals as Spatial Determinants

Islam, as the official religion in Iraq, occupies an influential position and distinct role in the architecture of traditional environments. It embodies, according to the viewpoint of many scholars, residents' social life, cultural beliefs and behaviour. It draws and defines intellectual and socio-cultural boundaries of individual's behaviour. It generates a code of conduct that governs and regulates various aspects of community life and daily practices (El-Gowhary, 2005, p. 17). Social interaction, cultural cooperation, religious assembly, gathering for prayers in addition to alleys' vitality during religious occasions are all evidence of the faith that affects the spatial morphology and physical properties of the house and the *mahalla* and creates, what the Iraqi architect 'Math Alousi' called, "*a popular architectural pattern and art*" (Makiya, 1982, p. 105).

Daily and weekly acts of worship affect directly the space-time factor. People's daily activities are manifested by the daily five prayers and weekly *Juma'a* (Friday) prayer as well as annual festivities. They control the temporal settings of people's domestic actions such as meeting, praying, sleeping, visiting, socialising and eating as well. *Al-Athan*, for example, represents a social belief, cultural principle and religious practice that calling for people five times a day to pray within the boundaries of the home, in public places or mosques. Practice performance is recommended to be exercised collectively, especially Friday noon prayer (*Salat aj juma'a*), so as to bring people together in an event with significant social, cultural and political indicators. The sequence of prayers constitutes the daily lives of Iraqis in traditional societies, and in turn affects the exercise of their commercial activities. It is essential, in this regard, realising and regulating the time factor in order to configure, accept and achieve daily practices in traditional contexts. Specific practices take place throughout the day, and impact heavily on the chronology of the prayer or the performance of rituals. As a result, four major daily periods have been identified in reference to, or as an expression of the space-time relationship. This kind of temporal setting during the day produced a type of spatial sequence which marked the subjectivity of time configured to local rituals and practices. Day times as the public time, where public activities, social gatherings and business took place, and night times as the private time, which manifested the family time where men were with their wives and sons at home, were key transition periods in the daily life of traditional communities. The first starts after *al-Fajr* prayer to *al-Maghrib* where the latter covers the period between *al-Maghrib* and *al-Fajr* prayers. This pattern of dynamic male actions offsets by a consistent form of women's activities and practices over the day. Local productive activities in the home were the main everyday practices for women (Abdelmonem, 2015, p. 149-151). The situation was different on Fridays where shops were closed and business was frozen. Men spent most of the day at home with their families or visited each other to enhance their social relations. *Al-Juma'a* prayer was the main religious ritual which brings together people in the mosque (the shrine). Moreover, marriage celebrations and other festivals

had to be achieved on '*Laylat ig-guma'a*', or Thursday night, adding, according to the beliefs of the community, some kind of sacredness to social rituals. I, as a member of such context, had spent thirty years of my life working with my father, who owned a shop in the old *suq* (market). Many conflicts, as I noticed, might start with people who engaged in business on Friday. Sometimes, shopkeepers came to the *suq*, in this day, and gathered in front of their premises before prayers to check if any of their followers opens his shop or performs work.

In "*Ramadan*" (the ninth month of the Islamic lunar calendar), the life of the home and the *mahalla* has a distinctive flavour and special rituals where Muslims must fast every day from dawn until sunset. The daily fasting reflects an important religious ritual, a collective effort and a social event influencing people's daily lives and practices by calling for a range of interrelated social, cultural and religious festivities culminating finally by the '*Eid-as-Seghir*', which represents the small one of the two main Islamic holidays. During the daily fasting for the holy month of Ramadan, people are not allowed to eat or drink anywhere and such behaviour must not openly commit by non-fasting, especially in public spaces (Bianca, 1987, p. 28). Non-Muslims' neighbours, sick people, travellers and colleagues at work should refrain from eating or drinking as a form of respect and moral commitment, and not to disturb the feelings of fasters.

Eid el-Fitr and *Eid el-Adhha* or '*Eid-el-Kabir*', which is celebrated at the end of the pilgrimage to Makka, are the two main feasts in Muslim societies. They have, as mentioned above, a significant influence on social life and everyday practices. The end of Ramadan and the 10th of *Thul-Qu'eda*, in *Hijri* calendar, determine respectively these feasts. They are greatly respected and regarded in Muslim societies. Social practices, communal experiences and collective gatherings at the scale of the home and the *mahalla* reflect a great impact on space-time settings. In these circumstances, the semi-private sphere of the house turns into semi-public or public, at specific times, to absorb or embrace a high degree of social interaction, solidarity and cohesion. In Kadhimiya, people gather from all *mahallas* in the huge yard of the shrine, in the early hours of the morning, to perform the *Eid* prayer before returning home to start practising occasions' rituals. Family members are clothed with their best and start visiting their parents, grandparents and each other. Certain types of food have to be prepared for the performance of these rituals, and courtyards turn into huge social gathering's yards. On the other hand, members of the *mahalla* begin, in groups, a long trip to visit each other before lunch time when all members of the extended family are gathered. These categories have been changed significantly in the last few decades because of the negative impact of the ever varying and changing political situation and contradictory cultural and intellectual ideologies.

7.1.7. Public Social Life in the Mahalla

The simplicity of daily life, social interactions, privacy and gender segregation, hospitality and strong relations between neighbours and members of the same *mahalla* are some of the distinctive aspects of social life in the community of Kadhimiya and similar traditional contexts. These values are inherited from one generation to other and mainly depend on the actual

performance of traditions, beliefs and customs that are not necessarily identical with religious principles. These values add some sort of vitality, activity and diversity to the *mahalla* and its various spatial and physical elements. They demonstrate important standards in its durability compared with modern districts. Following parts will shed light on the many practices taking place in the *mahalla* and how these actions affect its architectural and planning settings.

7.1.7.1. Daily Practices in the Public Realm of the *Mahalla*

The public sphere of the *mahalla* was largely determined by male actions and interrelations throughout the day. People gathered always in front of their shops and in alleys' points of convergence with local markets and coffeehouses. These joints were busy during the day and long hours of the night with different actions and activities. Coffeehouses were, and are still to a lesser extent, the only outlet for people, and served as recreational clubs. They were spread in all Kadhimiya spheres and kept open until midnight and even dawn. Each coffeehouse was defined by its specific users that representing a particular social and economic group such as the *Kashia* coffeehouse, frequented by the general public especially occupants of the *karrie* (tramway waggon), and *Sadik al-A'araji* coffeehouse which was regularly visited by poets, and so on. Social, cultural, commercial and recreational activities were always taken place in these zones. After the *Iftar* (fasting's breakfast) in the holy month of Ramadan, coffeehouses became more busy and active. People gathered inside and around it, in summer times, to play *Mheibes*, (the traditional local game), particularly after the *Isha'a* and specific *Tarawih* prayers to the month of Ramadan, and lasted shortly before the *Imsa'aq* (*Fajr*). Children, on the other hand, imitated adults' behaviour and gathered in groups in *mahalla's* alleys to practise the same game. During the day, streets were crowded by the movement of children, who were playing and interacting with each other without any restrictions from entering any house to search for their peers. They were, in some cases, gathered around a stranger and showered him with a barrage of questions to find out the purpose of his presence in the alley, at a time when women were, behind doors or *shanashil*, waiting for the results of this investigation.

The concept of sex segregation and the demand for privacy made the public realm of the space, according to Abu-Lughod (1983, p. 66), unsafe for women in traditional communities. The importance of these principles as key factors in the organisation of space, the introverted nature of the house and the movement system of the *mahalla* did not mean a total exclusion of women from public places, as defined in the rigid structure of the separation between sexes among wealthy families. Women were not allowed to use *mahalla's* public spaces except when visiting each other or shopping, with regard to families of low social class. Women, in specific situations, had to work to participate in family's income in the case of wearing the veil and cover-up according to the verses of the Holy Quran: "*And tell the believing women to lower their gaze and be modest, and to display of their adornment only that which is apparent, and to draw their veils over their bosoms*" (Ch. 24, verses 30-31). In this respect, women's interaction, with respect to public spaces, referred significantly to people's general attitudes of the concept of privacy,

women's social status and society's social and economic structure (Alizadeh, 2005, p. 219). By contrast, there was no need for females of wealthy families to go out and communicate with the world as long as their own affairs and daily needs could be done by other people, especially the eunuchs and servants. Social interactions for women of wealthy families were determined to be with those within the same social class. This did not mean that there were no interactions with closest neighbours who were trying to build good relationships with previous families. At the same time, the presence of the *shanashil* in the harem section of the house ensured women's contact with female neighbours and protected their observation of the public domain of the alley. The specific relations of wealthy families, between each other on the one hand and the Ottoman ruling on the other hand, and the high conservative nature for such families had a significant impact on the strict regulating system of spaces inside the house. The strong socio-political order of the hierarchical organisation of society and its strict social structure ensured, as Abdelmonem argued (2010, p. 186), the effective management of public and shared spaces for all categories *by local leaders whose wealth and resources were at their disposal*.

7.1.7..2. Festivities and Ceremonies in the Public Domain

Weddings (*al-afrah*), circumcision (*tohoor*) and funerals' ceremonies are significant social actions in these contexts. In such occasions, all community members should participate and take a role in their performance in order to encourage and promote social cohesion and solidarity among them. The absence, or failure to attend, of any member or family in such events was considered as a kind of disrespect for the concerned family and led, therefore, to the emergence or the outbreak of a kind of social tension between these families. An interviewee argued that:

“Attending such ceremonies was the duty of all members; men and women, senior and junior, even if families were in conflict with each other. Most of these conflicts and disputes can be resolved in such events with the presence of the elderly” [I4.3.15].

In the case of the wedding (*farah*), preparation for this ritual started several days before the event, including the completion of bride's furniture, clothing, and stores, as well as the preparation of a new residence in the home of the groom's family. During this occasion, the alley turned into an integral part of the interior spaces for the purpose of absorbing and accommodating the rituals and all the guests. It worked as an integration of outdoor spaces along with indoor areas. The event began since the early morning hours and covered a full day during which women were significantly practising their role in both indoor and outdoor realms. The groom and his friends started a trip to the local bath (*hammam*), which embodies other shared values in traditional contexts, where health and social organisation were located systematically. Subsequently, people gathered in front of and inside the house before the accompaniment of the groom, in a marching nature filled with joy and delight, to the bride's house. The latter, at this moment, was full of females, relatives and women of the *mahalla*. The bride and groom were taken again, in similar circumstances, to the home of the groom's family, where their final destination and the home of the future, promoting the extended nature of the traditional family. On funerals' occasions, men

gathered at the local mosque, or *Husseiniya*, where males and relatives spent at least three days greeting mourners, while women were home for the same purpose. This was concluded by a huge banquet dinner, prepared by the women or servants in the case of wealthy families, on the spirit of the deceased in the mosque or, usually, in his home, according to the availability of space. In this case, Holy *sharia* makes it imperative for relatives and neighbours of the deceased to cook food and send it to his house based on the words of the prophet Mohammad (PBUH); when Ja'far bin Abi Talib was martyred in the Battle of Mu'tah, "... *lit for Al Ja'far; they are people in calamity.*" In the case of pilgrimage, the spatial arrangement and physical appearance of the house and the alley had to be amended and prepared for receiving well-wishers. This practice was repeated twice in farewell and upon the return of *haj*. In the first case, the *haj* was granted by gifts or foods from his neighbours and acquaintances, as an expression of their support and standing next to his family during his absence, while expecting a similar response on his return. Huffs and disappointments were usually signed between families when re-gifts did not receive the acceptance or satisfaction from well-wishers.

The spatial and physical features of the *mahalla* and its alleys expressed mainly the nature of the social activity which was going on in its homes. Moreover, the ground floor of the house and the public sphere of the alley, in such festivities, merged together to form one extended public domain. As a consequence, these social practices, rituals and public actions were largely associated with the spatial organisation of the *mahalla*, in accordance with the circumstances and characteristics of each case in sadness or joy. In this vein, the *mahalla*, its alleys and public spaces were wearing grief in the first case or basking in the second, represented by many spatial and physical features or changes. These aspects demonstrate key factors in the continuation and sustainability of the traditional environment.

7.1.8. Socio-Spatial Structuring Order of the House

Socio-cultural factors and daily practices during this period revealed important principles in the organisation of space in the traditional house and enhanced our knowledge about local communities, time-space-activity interplay, norms and traditions. Historians' and travellers' accounts in addition to archival records and scholarly studies of many sociologists are revealed as important sources in the socio-spatial study of the traditional house. The spontaneous fabric of Kadhimiya reveals distinctive exemplary where people, from different social classes, live together in an integrated relationship. Due to many political and social factors as well as security standards experienced by the country during this period, the researcher adopted, in the selection of case studies, available and accessible examples, scholarly studies, archival documents, inhabitants' information and users' descriptions. Moreover, many examples in other parts of Iraq had been used to promote this analysis as they comprise similar socio-spatial interrelations, socio-cultural characteristics and architectural treatments.

Four houses of notable and high social class families were investigated and analysed, including *Bayt* Qasim Khan, *Bayt* Al-Nawab, *Bayt* Al-Khatib and *Bayt* Abaida in Kadhimiya. Each

of them has specific spatial and architectural treatments reflecting the socio-cultural aspects and, to some degree, the daily life of the family. Because of pre-mentioned obstacles, the researcher adopted, regarding the architectural plans for some houses, some sources, such as students' reports submitted to the Department of Architecture-University of Baghdad and the analytical survey of Dr. Ihsan Fethi in 1977 for protecting the cultural heritage of Baghdad, as well as the personal observation, survey and analysis. Regarding low-class housing units, the analysis consists of three different homes in Kadhimiya and the city of Hilla, where the researcher came from. In line with the socio-spatial hierarchical system and its connectedness with internal order as long as *the way the external order is developed depends on what happens in internal spaces and vice versa* (Rapoport, 1977, p. 309), the private domain of the house will be investigated to understand the nature of social continuity in public places by reference to private spaces. Both groups will be discussed in details to construct an idea of the impact of socio-cultural factors and daily interactions on the spatial organisation of residents' public/private activities jointly with the public sphere of the *mahalla*. Before going into the study and analysis of these examples and in order to derive a whole idea about the spatial organisation of the traditional *mahalla* and its residential units, it is necessary to provide a brief description of the Iraqi family, its social components and main characteristics.

7.1.8.1. Social Structure of Iraqi Traditional Family

The family is a dominant social unit where the whole community revolves around. It holds certain social values and principles promoting community's socio-cultural aspects over the course of time and developing, therefore, particular individual and group identities. The extended family was the basic pattern in this period. The nuclear family, in this structure, was part of the extended one which consists of many families living together in one physical compound, or, in some examples, in many nearby houses strengthening, thus, mutual and interdependent relations (Figure 7.6). The extended family has one head that manages the whole family and is supported by males. It is usually headed by the oldest male member. When sons marry, they often continue living at home or in adjoining or adjacent units. Therefore, it is not unusual for several generations to live together. The family head has complete control over family's social, cultural and economic responsibilities and affairs. On the other hand, the mother is considered as the family head within the limits of the house, and after her partner in case of his presence. Both must, traditionally and by Islam, be honoured and respected by all family members. Following generations have been divided by gender and age creating other sub-structures within the former one. The eldest son takes his father's role in the management of family affairs during his absence while the eldest daughter retains her mother's role in certain occasions and helps her largely at home.

This type of separation between sexes affected to a large extent the concept of daily life within the confines of the private sphere of the home. It seemed very complicated compared to the social structure of the contemporary nuclear family (Abdelmonem, 2015, p. 155). Woman's life during most of the day was divided between productive actions and social networks. Each

influences, in particular, the spatial characteristics of the home. The Performance of productive activities took largely place in the kitchen and the *howsh* (courtyard). Female's social networks or interactions could be done in the *talar*, *lwan* or *howsh* when the men are outside the home or on the first floor (the harem zone) during their stay. In view of this, the staircase, in traditional houses, was planned to be in a good connection with the entrance and *howsh*, and away from men's gathering areas in order to give women some kind of freedom. The *ursi*, *kabishkan* and bedrooms represented female's private spheres in the traditional house. This division produced two clear spatial zones; the *public section* on the ground level and the *harem section* at the top level. As discussed earlier, each extended family consisted of many subfamilies depending on the area of the house and the availability of space. Total members of large families could be up to about (20) persons while small families were about (12) persons per household with at least two generations (Al Ashab, 1974, p. 615). The space of the house was entirely structured to accommodate the whole family in a complex spatial arrangement. Wealth and poverty were not always decisive factors or determinants in the size of the traditional Iraqi family due to the local belief that: 'Every child comes into the world with his living'. Wealthy families, moreover, used 1-2 servants or slaves with their associated spaces around the entrance or on the basement level.

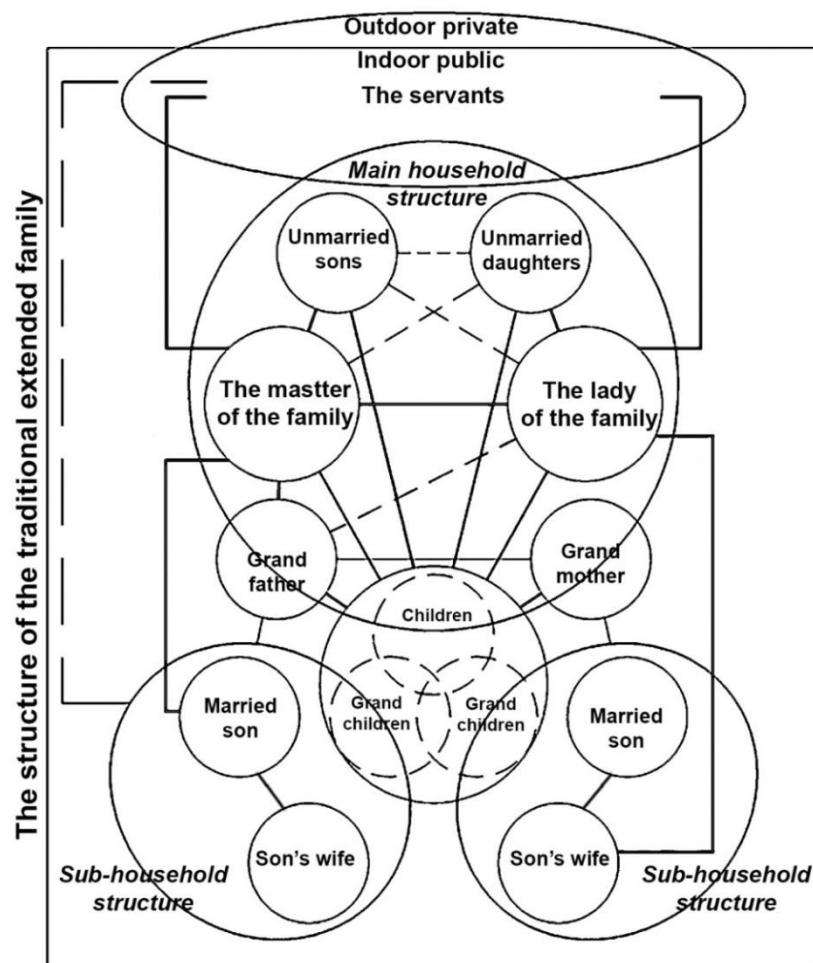


Figure 7.6: The social structure of the traditional extended Iraqi family in the 19th and the start of the 20th century

Family's social values and traditions influenced largely the whole society and its associated built contexts. Therefore, it is important, as Werner asserted (1987, p. 173), *to link interpersonal relationships* and interactions of family and community members *to their physical context* to find out the way these values were employed.

7.1.8.2. Houses of Notable and High Social Class Families

Houses of this group are observed significantly within the first residential belt surrounding the shrine where merchants, notable and wealthy people resided. Home involves a certain order of space to reach the central courtyard (*howsh*). This order emphasises significantly the concept of privacy as an influential factor in the Islamic beliefs and traditional principles. It restricts the direct visual contact between the inner area of the house and the public sphere of the alley. This factor has been enhanced spatially through the design and organisation of the transitional realm of the entrance in an angled and bent form. This space conveys *a meaningful and very human and social idea* from one realm to another (Lawson, 2001, p. 48). In some cases and due to the social status of the owner, this region is complicated spatially as it leads to two different social sections with, sometimes, two separate courtyards; men zone (*diwankhana*) and women section (*harem*). The first is usually located near the main entrance while the other in one of the corners in an adjacent position to the main part. This pattern confirms the high restricted relations between private and public spheres. Houses' public, semi-public/private and private activities are arranged spatially around the courtyard on two levels. The ground level accommodates public activities while the upper one includes private and semi-private actions, especially in single-courtyard houses. The arrangement of spaces takes into account the influence of environmental factors through the allocation of the courtyard, *talars* and service spaces. It indicates the significant impact of physical conditions, such as climate, on the location of public spaces and the spatial transformation of various activities during the day and year. Accordingly, living spaces and *talars* take largely the north, south or, in some cases, the west side of the courtyard.

The structure of the courtyard and the nature of exclusion from the outside world, which adjust and control the spatial flexibility between internal spaces and the public alley, were dominated the architecture of the house during the first phase. These factors had been addressed and dealt with through the possibility of spatial transformation of activities throughout the day to accommodate the daily practices, public activities and rituals. At public events, women used their own section on the upper floor. *Harem* zone provided the ultimate privacy by the presence of the *ursi* from which women could gather and monitor what was going on in the public section. Notable houses include, at least, one *kabishkan* room on the mezzanine level from which female and children could observe both inside and outside the house. Social, spatial and architectural attributes of each part will be discussed in the analysis of following cases in Kadhimiya, followed by many examples related to low-class households or commoners.

7.1.8.2.1. *Bayt (House) Qasim Khan* in Kadhimiya (1860 AD)

Historical Background:

This house is located in *Al-Tell mahalla* in Kadhimiya in the north-east side of the main alley (nr. 23), which leads through a local *suq* (market) to the shrine, with an average area of about 96 m² (Figure 7.7). It has about 12 metres' long south-west façade overlooking the main alley, and one main entrance on the right side of the main façade. Other three sides, adjacent to neighbours, are solid with similar building altitudes and formation, as they had been built during the same period and by the same builder for specific high social class families. This can be observed through their high-decorated façades and interiors. According to its physical properties, architectural details and archival records of the General Organisation for Antiquities and Cultural Heritage in Baghdad, the house was built around 1860 AD, and could be earlier. The main owner or builder of the house

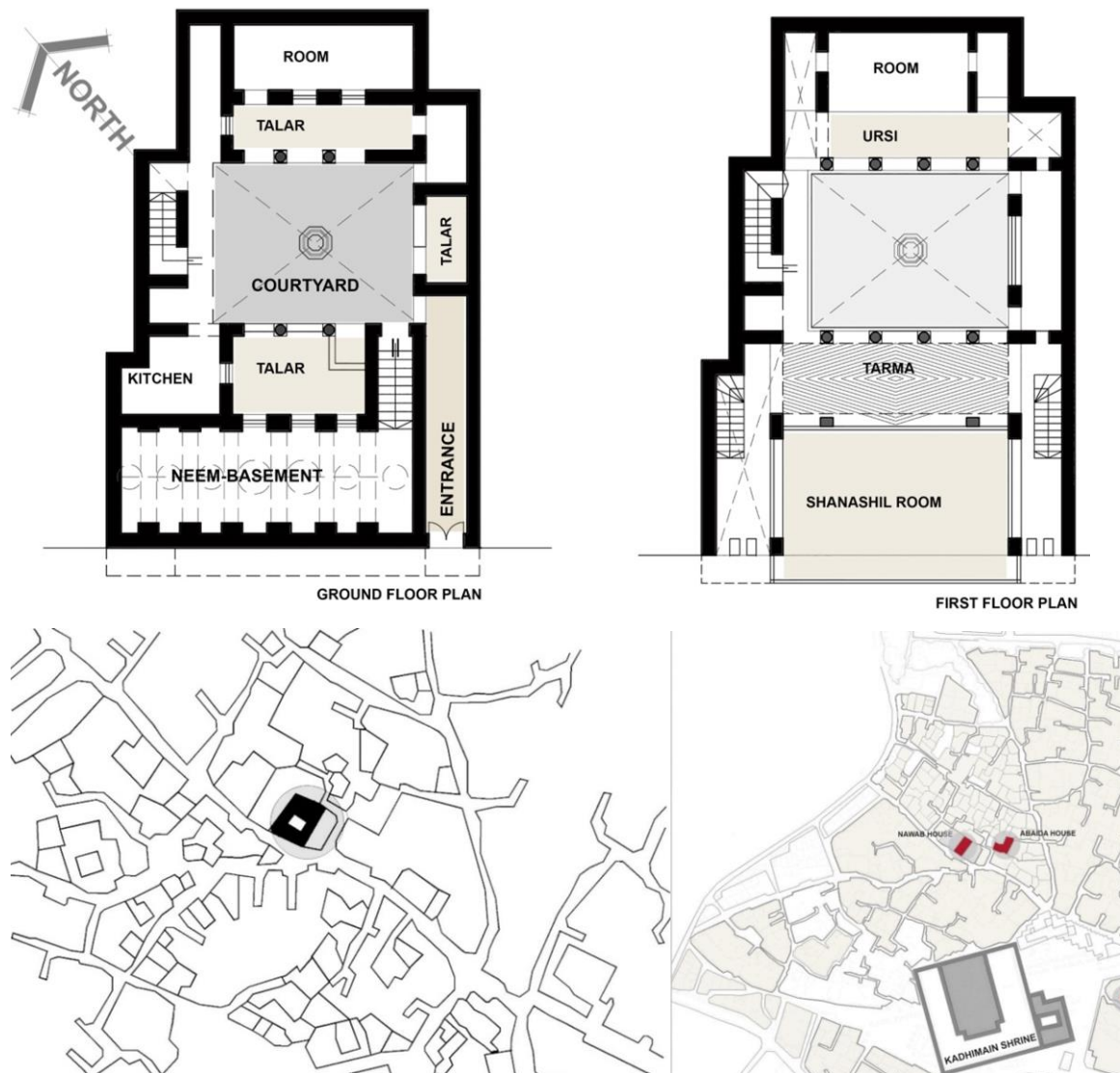


Figure 7.7: The architectural plans of *Bayt (house) Qasim Khan*, *Al-Tell mahalla*, Kadhimiya-Baghdad, 1860

was Qasim Khan – the head of A'l Sari's family in Kadhimiya. The house was occupied for nearly two centuries by different independent households which impacted strongly its structural fabric and architectural details. The house was renovated by the General Organisation for Antiquities and currently occupies by the Religious School (*Hawzah*) of Imam Kadhimi, which was established in 1424 *hijri* (2003 AD). The current ownership of the house returns to the Shiite *Waqf* Foundation (Figure 7.8). The house, with its adjacent neighbours on both sides, has great cultural and civilised values. The ground level of the house consists of a bent entrance space, (6.00*1.50 m), leading to an open *howsh* (courtyard) that revealing confidently an essential feature in the architecture of the house.



Figure 7.8: Architectural components of *Shanahil* and *Kabishkan* in Qasim Khan's house in Kadhimiya.

Architectural Description:

The house was completely formed and occupied as it almost currently appears, with respect to its spatial organisation and habitable practices, in 1860. It consists of two colonnade *talars* (*Iwans*) with specific architectural character and style of each of them. One of the *talars* had been built and used as an additional room. Northeast *talar* represents the winter hall with its significant polygonal, rich wooden patterns, mostly Arabesque in design, panels decorating the ceiling, where medallions adorned at the centre. This hall leads to a room at the rear with three openings towards the *talar*. Southwest *talar* is the summer one with three recessed openings in its long wall. A staircase in the corner of the courtyard, between the *talar* and entrance's opening towards the courtyard, leads to the *Neem* cellar. Another one is located on the north-west side of the *howsh* and uses mostly by family members, especially females, to the upper floor. The ceiling of most rooms and halls in both levels are decorated with mostly arabesque-designed wood panels.

The upper level of the house, which represents the *harem* section, includes a colonnade *tarma* and two *ursi* rooms above the *talars* of the ground level. The south-west *ursi* leads to the *shanashil* room, above the reception hall on the ground level. It protrudes, with the *kabishkan* on the mezzanine level above the entrance, about 70 cm. towards the void sphere of the main alley.

The main façade consists of a richly decorated portal, with recessed pointed-arched modules decorated with polygonal patterns of brick mosaic. The *shanashil* includes six modular, semi-circular headed, sash windows where the *kabishkan* room is surrounded by seven modular. Stepped wooden brackets, which culminate the ends of timber joists, protect both the *shanashil* and *kabishkan*. The courtyard is covered, as an environmental solution, to protect the house from dusty winds and severe environmental conditions. Many accessory spaces, such as toilets, stairs, corridors and a variety of services are distributed at both levels. Due to the alignment of the house for the main alley, most spaces on both levels are arranged around the central *howsh* along its sides, with reference to the alley. Activity spaces on both levels can be accessed through transitional *tarmas* and corridors.

Socio-Spatial Analysis of the Different Zones

In order to understand social activities and everyday practices within private spheres, it is essential to divide house's different spaces into groups according to their functional role. The relation between these groups determines the overall form of the house and the organisation of its different spheres. *Bayt* Qasim Khan includes an entrance, two *talars* and reception hall (*Barrani*), which can accommodate public and semi-public daily activities; two *ursi* rooms and *tarma* for semi-private/public and, in some cases, private activities; a *shanashil* room, a *kabishkan* and bedrooms for the accommodation of private practices; and finally, service activities including a cooking space (kitchen), toilets, corridors and other service components. The upper floor reflects, in general, the private domain of the house (harem zone) with its ultimate and most protected privacy. The first group reveals public and semi-public realms, which, in specific social occasions and rituals, cover the reception hall (*Barrani*), the two *talars/iwans* and the central *howsh*. The flexibility in the use of these worlds is largely dependent on the social requirements and cultural settings of the practice as well as environmental conditions. The reception hall reflects the main zone which is used for public meetings with guests and visitors, or by family members when discussing their most influential affairs. Literally, the word '*Barrani*' reflects the public concept of the space and means '*outside*'. This space is of rectangular shape and is in a good connection with the space of the entrance and the south-west *talar* as well. Its form and domestic settings indicate the owner's wealth and his communal social status. It is connected with the *talar* through a door opening and two windows to obtain some indirect light from the *howsh* and to allow, on certain occasions, a kind of social connection with other guests in the *talar* or with family members inside the house. These openings are mostly covered with curtains to promote family's privacy in the presence of guests and visitors. *Talars* are usually of rectangular form with an open side of the central courtyard and an elevated floor by about 10-15 cm. from the level of the *howsh*. *Talar's* combination with the back room reflects the *Hiri* style in the architecture of historical palaces. Both *talars* are used alternatively during the day and seasons according to environmental settings, where the north-west one is largely utilised by females. In summer times, a well-designed fountain at the centre of the *howsh*, called *shetherwan*, is mostly used for cooling down surrounding spaces, and as an attractive focal point for the meeting of family members

around. *Talars*' floors are usually covered with rugs, or mats in summer times, and are used for eating, praying, sleeping and sitting. Consequently, wearing shoes is not allowed in *talars* and must be left on the floor of the courtyard next to the *talar* in order to provide a kind of purity to these spaces. Movable wooden sofas, called *kanafat*, with covered mattresses and attractive shallow pillows, reflecting the social status of the family, are often occupied *talar*'s three sides. Family members or guests use these sofas to sit in hierarchy starts from the highest level at the middle of the long wall facing the *howsh*. During the day and the absence of males, females use the central courtyard and *talars* for food preparation, cooking and social interaction between each other and with female visitors. The kitchen, the toilet (*al khala'a* or *bayt alraha*) and a small wash basin in the corner of the courtyard are largely used to support public activities.

The upper storey of the house, which represents the second group, holds private and semi-private activities and is mainly used by the female as the *harem* quarter. This term is derived, as previously mentioned, from the word '*haram*' in Islamic principles and law which means 'banned or prohibited'. *Ursi* rooms on the first floor are used for social meetings and interactions of women, in the case of public activities and celebrations. They give females, by their very detailed sash-windows, the ability to control and monitor the ground level from the inside out without being considered or observed. These spaces are highly and intensively decorated, as areas of boasting and self-praise among women, showing the prestigious social status occupied by the family in the kadhimiya society. The northeast one is opened to a bedroom at the back. The colonnade *tarma* on the south-west direction of the house is in direct contact with the *shanashil* room, which is largely used by females in observing the outside sphere of the alley or in communicating with opposite neighbours without being seen or noticed. Sleeping zones on the first floor are highly protected by many corridors or transitional spheres to achieve an ultimate degree of privacy and the highest level of protection. This concept gives an indication of the difference in the privacy required within the same social space, and a reflection of the conservative nature of Iraqis' personality. Similar to *talars*, shoes need to be left outside the functional area of *ursi* rooms, which are also covered by rugs or mats. These spaces are supplied by narrow sitting mattresses and shallow pillows on their three sides. The main one, in some cases, is used by the family head and his lady, revealing the utmost private nature of this part. Praying, sleeping, children's accommodations and females' social meetings and practices also take place in this area, manifesting the multifunctional concept of space. The inner staircase, leading to the upper level, the open *tarma*, overlooking the central courtyard, corridors and other shared spaces represent the semi-private/public sphere of the house. These spaces are almost allowed for family members, children and servants, and are used as interpersonal interacting spaces.

The *howsh* is an important part and the most dominant architectural feature in traditional houses. It is a central open space around which various social spaces are usually arranged. It asserts the multifunctional concept of the traditional space where public and semi-public activities can take place in different temporal settings. This space is connected with the public domain of the outside alley by the bent entrance which prevents any direct visual intrusion from the outside. Family's different social activities, in joy and sorrow, take significantly place in this space. It

represents the gathering zone of the family where social, cultural, daily practices and activities can be done. In certain occasions and celebrations, the central courtyard turns into the public sphere, and shares, therefore, the public domain of the alley for the purpose of accommodating public social gatherings and interactions.

7.1.8.2.2. *Bayt (House) Al-Nawab in Kadhimiya (1860 AD.)*

Historical Background:

According to its high finishing details, architectural features, physical elements and decorations, this house belongs with confidence to a famous family and shows owner's social status in the community of Kadhimiya. The house was built and occupied by its owner, the rich Indian Shiite family, Al-Nawabs. The owner, according to archival records from the General Authority of Iraqi antiquities, came to stay in Kadhimiya during 1850-1860 after his exile in late 1850 by the British. The house is located in *Al-Tell mahalla*, adjacent to the former house, with a south-west façade overlooking the main street which runs through the crowded market (suq) and opens to the shrine. It represents, with Bayt Qasim Khan, an outstanding cultural and civilised value according to the official viewpoint of those responsible for these components. A great deal of different families occupied sequentially this house over a long period of time, which caused clear damages to its conditions, before taking it over by the General Authority for Antiquities and Inventory of Cultural Heritage in Baghdad in the late twentieth century. Current property returns to the Association of Intellectual Promotion, which was established in 2003, and is managed by Baghdad's Cultural Forum (Figure 7.9).



Figure 7.9: Internal images showing the architectural features surrounded the courtyard in *Bayt Al-Nawab*, *Al-Tell mahalla* in Kadhimiya-Baghdad, 1860.

The ground floor of the house is typically had one *howsh* around which a variety of daily practices and activities can happen. The house is divided vertically into four main levels including the

basement (*sirdab*) and the mezzanine level. The ground level has been allocated for public and semi-public activities while upper floors are for semi-private and private social practices. Two *kabishkans* are located on the mezzanine level overlooking internal spheres of the house, on its two levels, and the outside world of the alley. They are provided with wooden screens allowing visual contact only from the inside out. Many public/semi-public spaces and services surround the main *howsh* (courtyard).

Architectural Description:

The 17 m. long south-west façade consists of *shanashil*'s windows on the upper level and two *kabishkans*' windows on both sides. The upper part was collapsed in the second part of the 20th century and reconstructed according to available archival sources and the description of many scholars and users. The *kabishkan*, on the left side of the *shanashil*, is blinded with the outer wall, with a drop of about 20 cm. into the void of the alley. It includes three semi-circular high-headed windows with *chefqeem*-decorated panels around.

The main level of the house consists of the principal courtyard and many spaces around. It is a simple organisation and accessible from the main entrance located in the southern corner. The latter is characterised by a long bent corridor and vaulted opening to the *howsh*. Other corners of the courtyard are occupied by cooking and service activities accessed to the void sphere of the courtyard through many vaulted doors. The roughly overall area of the house is about 360 sq. m. with an internal rectangular-form courtyard of about (8*10 sq. m.). The roof of the courtyard was covered in recent times by a vaulted structure, as an environmental protection, and framed by curved wooden cornice guarded by an iron balustrade. The ground level includes three colonnade rectangular-form *talars*. The south-east *talar* opens to the space of the entrance through a small vaulted slot. This arrangement gives an indication that this slot can be used by slaves and servants in both their visual guarding the entrance and servicing their masters in the case of public activities, celebrations or the presence of notable visitors. The south-west *talar* has a window's opening in the midst to provide the vaulted *neem* cellar behind with light and ventilation. A vaulted opening with staircase leads to the space of *neem* between the basement and the ground floor. This space is largely used by the family in siesta periods. The north-east *talar* leads through a semi-circular door's opening, to a room at the back, and a semi-circular window on each side of the door. The ceiling of *talars*, *tarmas* and the *ursi* are decorated with polygonal and concentric lozenge-like wooden patterns adorned with centrally-positioned medallions and wooden, mostly, arabesque-designed details and finishes. House columns at all levels are wooden with *muqarnased* capitals. Most of internal windows and openings are of semi-circular form with coloured glazing panels drawing a fascinated artistic reflection of lights inside spaces. The upper level of the house includes two colonnade *tarmas*, an *ursi* on the north-east side of the *howsh*, *shanashil* room opens to the south-west *tarma* and four *kabishkans* on the mezzanine level distributed in house's four corners. The *ursi* room is highly and richly finished with intricate

patterns of recesses, panels of the coloured mosaic mirror and semi-circular with coloured glass sash windows (Figure 7.10).



Figure 7.10: *Tarma* and *ursi* at the first level in *Bayt Al-Nawab, Al-Tell mahalla, Kadhimiya*.

The house, through its spatial organisation and architectural features, represents a magnificent example of the traditional house in Iraq. Interested people and official authorities are worried about this architectural masterpiece from the effects of the destruction and demolition of the surrounding area due to the new re-development project.

Socio-Spatial Analysis of Internal Activities:

Public and semi-public activities take mostly the same spatial organisation in Qasim Khan's house or generally most traditional houses during this period, reflecting the conservative nature of the Iraqi society. They take largely place on the ground level within the space of *talars*, cooking and services. The main difference, in this case, is the presence of an additional *talar* in the south-west side of the courtyard. My argument, as I mentioned above, is that this space was used by servants and slaves to serve their masters, guests and visitors in addition to its use by family members and guests as an additional space in case of public activities and celebrations.

Private and semi-private activities take place on the upper level of the house. The *ursi* room, above the north-west *talar* on the ground level, is highly decorated and is used by the family head and his mistress at times, as well as females during their meetings with their guests from females. It is mainly used by women and children to monitor public social activities and daily practices taking place on the ground level without being noticed or seen. The house includes a *shanashil* room and a *kabishkan*, on each side, as well as two additional *kabishkans* on its north-west side used by children and women to monitor the *ursi*, the ground level and the outside alley. There is a small rectangular niche in the bedroom wall, called *kunjeena*, used to store clothes as an inbuilt wardrobe. This space is often used by children to hide inside in the case of doing anything wrong that can expose them to the punishment of the head of household. In general, private and semi-

private activities are similar in traditions and norms with that explained in the previous case or are mostly typical to traditional activities of this period.

7.1.8.2.3. *Bayt (House) Al-Khatib in Kadhimiya (1870 AD.)*

Historical Background:

Bayt Al-Khatib was built by the AstarAbadis of Kadhimiya around 1870 and was occupied by the family of Abd Al-Amir Al-Khatib. Afterwards, many independent households had occupied it which caused severe damages to its physical fabric. Occasionally, it was taken over by the State Board of Antiquities and Cultural Heritage of Iraq. The house is currently uninhabited and closed due to the collapse of many parts of its upper level. Spatial organisation, architectural features and physical components of the house introduce an attractive and distinguished example of the traditional courtyard house in Baghdad. It represents an architectural and historical value worthy to be protected by official authorities (Figure 7.11).

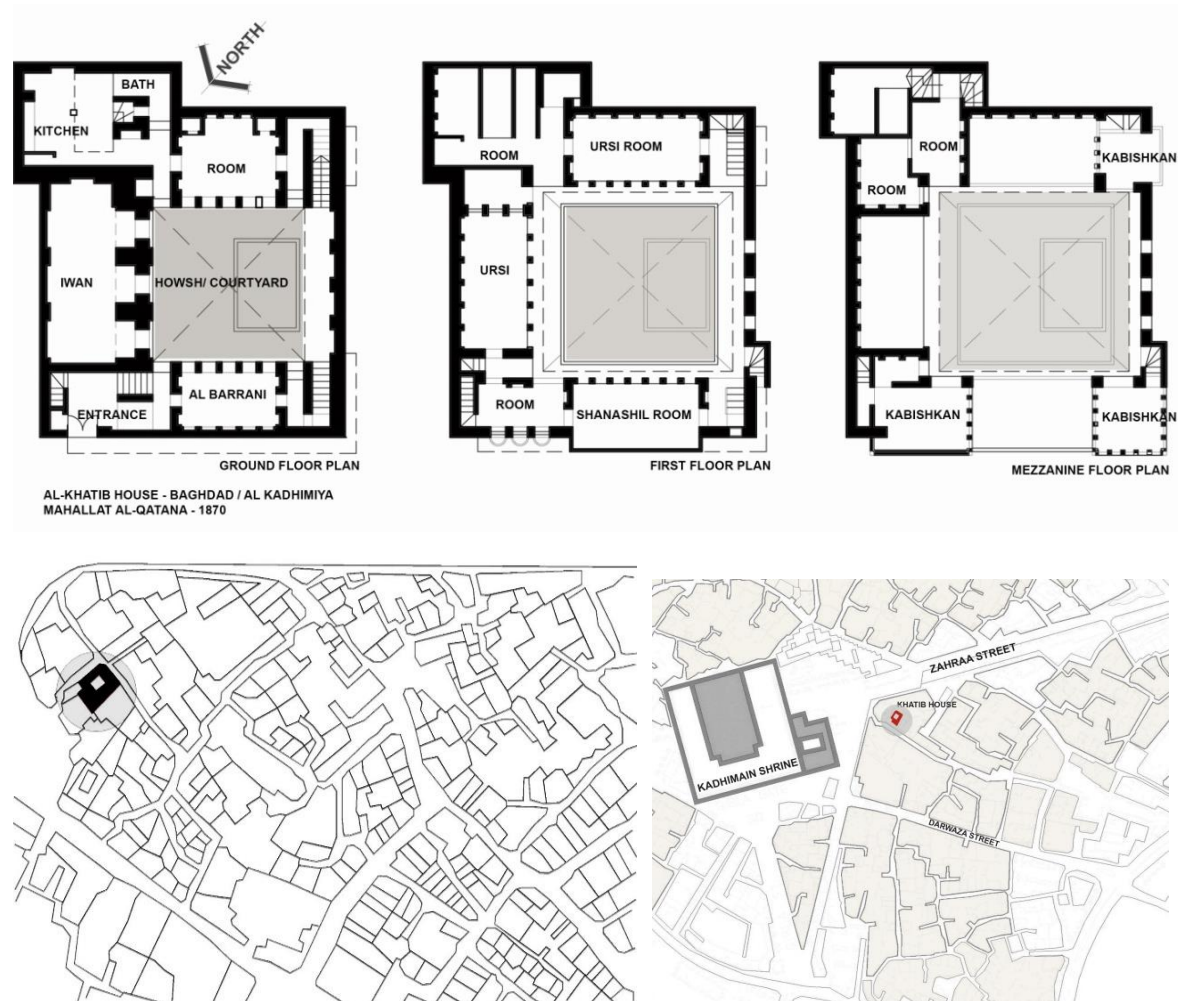


Figure 7.11: Architectural and site plans of *Bayt Al-Khatib*, Qatana *mahalla*, Kadhimiya-Baghdad, 1870

The house was built in a corner with two facades overlooking the main alley off the *Darwaza* Street in *Qattana mahalla*, which leads directly to the Shrine of Imam Kadhimi (PBUH), and on a roughly rectangular plot of about 357 sq. m. It consists of four levels, including the basement, the ground level, the upper level and the mezzanine. Architectural details and finishing elements of the house indicate that the owner was from a prestigious family and had a high social status in the community of Kadhimiya. The ground floor consists of one central courtyard of about (10*10 sq. m.) associated with cooking and service activities, one *iwan*, one *talar* and a reception hall (*Barrani*) in addition to three vaulted *neem* cellars, a kitchen and *hammam* (bath). The floor is assigned to public and semi-public activities. The upper level represents the harem section and includes two *ursi* rooms, a *shanashil* room with the *ursi* window, two small rooms and four *kabishkans* on the mezzanine level. Private and semi-private activities take place in this section similar to previous examples. Typically, *Bayt Al-Khatib*, in its spatial organisation, reflects the prevailing architectural pattern used in traditional houses in this period.

Architectural Description:

The north-east front of the house is the main façade that overlooking the main alley. It represents the richest in its architectural details in Kadhimiya and about 16 m. long. It consists of a renovated plain of a brick wall and an elliptically curved door opening (portal) at ground level, crowned by a zigzag pattern brick panel. A large *shanashil* window with seven semi-circular headed sash windows, flanked by a *kabishkan* on each side with modular of semi-circular sash windows. These elements stand out about 80 cm. towards the void sphere of the alley. All sash windows for both the *shanashil* and *kabishkans* are protected by wooden shutters and vertical iron rods. Stepped-ended wooden beams with curved edges support the projections of these components. Semi-cylindrical iron cages, in the space between the main gate and the *kabishkan* to the left of the *shanashil*, were used to put plants and water jars to be cooled by the breeze. The outer face of the surrounding wall between the ceiling of *shanashil* and the earth had been collapsed and renovated using new bricks (Figure 7.12).

The entrance, with its bent form, is associated respectively with a rectangular form reception hall (*barrani*) on the northeast side of the house and, through a vaulted opening, with the central courtyard. The reception hall is a highly decorated and finished space referring to the high social status of the owner of the house in the community. It is connected with the internal sphere of the house through five high-rise semi-circular windows covered by curtains from inside the hall to protect family's privacy in the case of visitors, guests and meetings. The main difference of this house than previous cases is the presence of a separate reception hall in direct contact with the transitional space of the entrance. In this case, notable visitors and guests can be invited and easily directed to the *barrani* without disrupting family's privacy. This space is also used by men in public activities, weddings and other celebrations. A small service space is located on the left of the entrance and used, in some cases, by visitors and guests as a toilet or external sink.



Figure 7.12: The front façade of *Bayt Al-Khatib*, Qatana *mahalla*, Kadhimiya, showing *shanashil*, *kabishkan* and the entrance.

A rectangular form hall, called *Iwan*, is located on the courtyard's south-east side, occupying its entire width and about 60 cm. higher than the level of the courtyard with two huge, crossed-formed, pillars supporting the upper level of the house. The ground level includes, moreover, a *talar*, on the north-west side of the courtyard which faces the reception hall (*barrani*) on the other side and opens through its sides to a large kitchen, *hammam* (bathroom) and a transitional corridor. The upper storey includes a balcony on the four sides of the courtyard with a volute iron balustrade for the protection of family members and children. The balcony opens, through many transitional spaces or corridors, to the *shanashil*, with an *ursi* window, two *ursi* rooms and two small private rooms. As mentioned above, four *kabishkans* occupy the four corners of the house where three of them oversee the outer sphere of the alley. All modular sash windows have semi-circular fanlights and are protected by vertical iron bars. Fanlights are decorated with an arabesque motif. The roof opening of the courtyard is framed by a wooden cornice crested with *sachagh* and guarded by a wrought-iron balustrade (Fethi, 1977, p. 243).

Socio-Spatial Analysis of Internal Activities:

Spatial organisation of public, semi-public/private and private activities and social practices of *Bayt Al-Khatib* is typically similar to those cited and analysed earlier in relation to other houses. They are almost similar to the traditional organisation of the space in this period. The specific difference here is that the performance of public activities, meetings and other practices can happen within the space of the reception hall without affecting the daily life of the family inside and their privacy through the direct relationship between the transitional space of the entrance and the reception hall. Accordingly, many social gatherings, trade settlements and community's matters could be completed and settled down within the spatial boundaries of this relationship. Males can also interact with their peers from the *mahalla* socially within the scope of the reception

hall while the family head, the lady and other family members are within the functional zones of the house or the courtyard. This space needs always to be clean and pure, and shoes must be taken off outside this space. It emphasises the multifunctional nature of traditional spaces where eating, sleeping, praying, meetings, sitting and other social activities can be practised during the day. Servants or slaves are always sitting in the space of the entrance for servicing their masters and guarding the main gate. The *ivan*, at ground level, is usually used by the family heads and males in discussing the affairs of the family and everyday issues. Moreover, this space is used as women's interacting and socialising space during the day. Wearing shoes is also prohibited in this space and *talar* as long many social activities, rituals and traditions can occur in these zones. Carpets, or mats in summer times, cover regularly the floor of these spaces to maintain spaces' purity for the performance and completion of praying, eating, sleeping or sitting activities. Richly domestic elements and components are largely used as an indication of the high social status of the family in Kadhimiya society.

Private and semi-private activities take place in the harem section on the upper level similarly to that analysed in previous cases. *Neem* cellars and the *sirdab* (basement) are used by family members for sleeping, eating, praying and children's accommodations during hot summer periods. Moreover, these spaces are considered as appropriate zones for keeping foods, mattresses and other important things. They represent effective architectural solutions to severe environmental effects. There are no specific differences in the socio-spatial settings of the activities taking place in this house that make it unique from the common traditions and customs discussed in previous cases. Accordingly, I argue that families' activities were typical in this period in terms of their traditional spatial performance and completion.

7.1.8.2.4. Bayt (House) Abaida in Kadhimiya (1840 AD)

Historical Background:

This attractive L-shaped house is located in *Al-Tell mahalla* in Kadhimiya and opens, through two entrances on opposite sides of its ends, to the outer sphere of the alley. It was built, on its south-east side, in the dead-end zone of the *mahalla* with a narrow front overlooking the alley (agd). The main entrance is located at the south-western end of the house. Accordingly, the house has no proper facades as its various sides are adjacent to neighbours except for the small two pieces of entrances. It forms, in its spatial form, a sandwich-like filling between other surrounding neighbours (Figure 7.13).

According to the archival records of the State Board of Antiquities and Cultural heritage, its architectural features and structural details were probably put in place around 1840. The highly decorated architectural form, details and spatial arrangement reflect family's great social status in Kadhimiya community and make it one of the fine and utmost attractive examples of traditional houses in Baghdad. The house was built and dwelt by Abaida, and then transferred to his descendants who could not afford its maintenance costs. Architectural drawings of this house are

derived from students' reports in the library of the School of Architecture, Baghdad University, and Ihsan Fethi's analytical study of traditional houses in Baghdad in addition to the personal survey and analysis. The house, in general, needs to be restored to its original conditions and listed within the officially protected sites as it represents an architectural, cultural and historical value and a prominent example of the evolution of the architecture of traditional houses in Iraq.

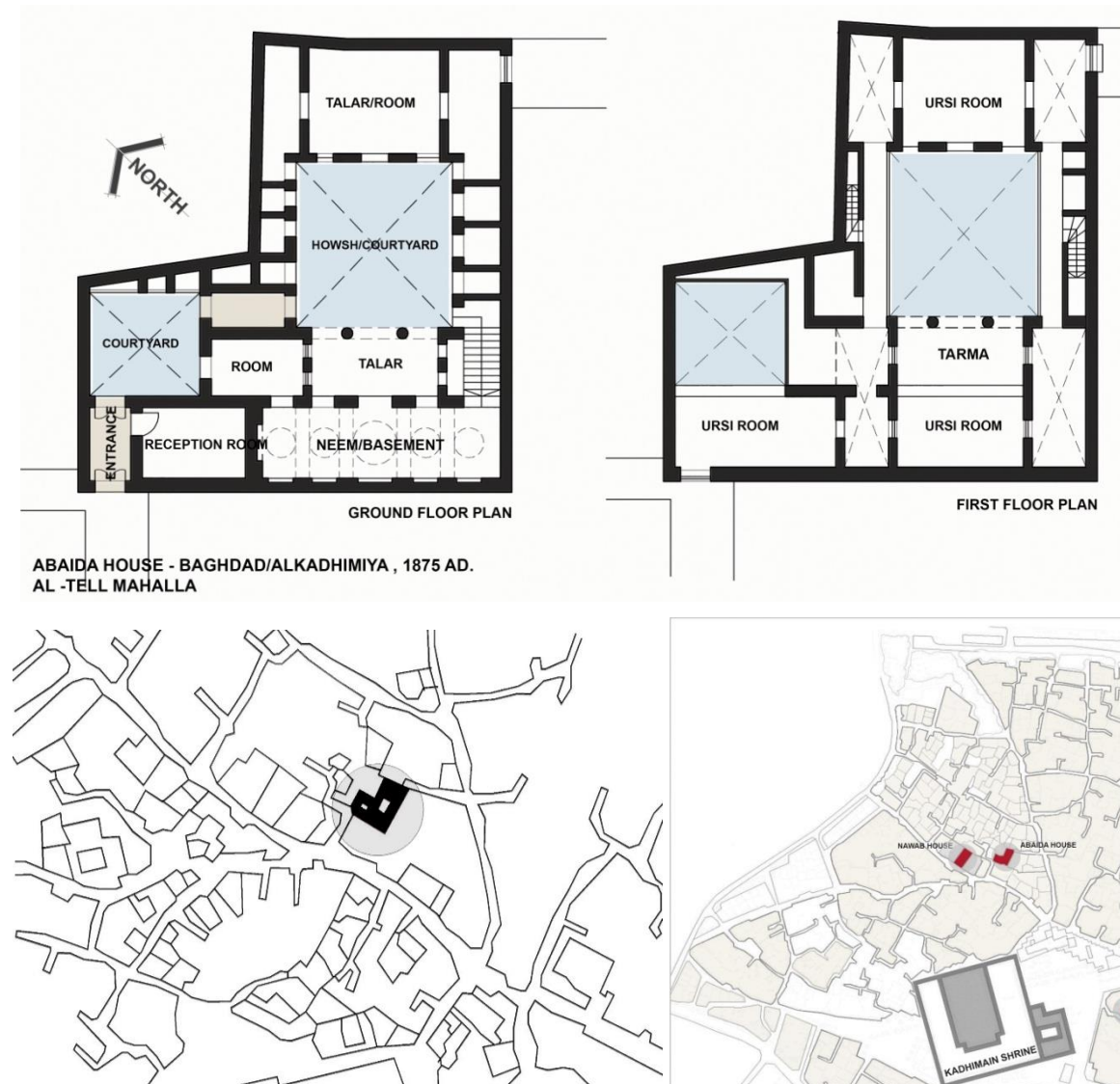


Figure 7.13: Architectural plans of *Bayt Abaida* in *Al-Tell mahalla*, Kadhimiya-Baghdad, 1875 (Fethi, 1977, p. 162)

Architectural Description:

Around 1840, the house was occupied and fully formed in terms of the spatial organisation of social activities as evidenced by archival records. The building consists of two courtyards divided the house into two different social zones. The first *howsh* (courtyard) is about 4*7 sq. m. and is approached from the south-western entrance through a small transitional corridor as it leads users directly to the central yard (Figure 7.14). The reception hall (*Barrani*) is rectangular in shape and is located on the right side of the corridor while a room, kitchen, bathroom and many small

service spaces are located around the *howsh*. This part was originally used as the public section of the house (*Diwankhana*). The upper level of this part consists of an *ursi* room on the south-west side of the *howsh* with three rectangular form modular of sash windows open to the outside sphere of the alley, and seven similar units to the inner courtyard. This space is linked with another *ursi* room on the upper level of the second section through a transitional space. Moreover, a balcony, on the two angled sides of the courtyard, is connected with the *tarma* from the second courtyard through a transitional space at the corner, called '*Iwancha*'.

The second courtyard, about 8*9 sq. m., represents the private zone (*Harem section*) and is associated with the south-eastern entrance, in the dead end part of the alley, through a bent transitional space. On the other side, this part has been linked with the public section through a vaulted transitional corridor, which opens in the corner of each of them, forming, with the *Iwancha* on the first level, a bridge-like spatial strip between the two courtyards. This section consists of two *talars*, a vaulted opening leading through a staircase down to the *neem* cellar, many service spaces, on the other side of the *talar*, and a room. The main *talar*, on the south-west side of the courtyard, is about 3*7 sq. m. with *muqarnased* capitals' wooden columns. *Talar's* long back wall consists of segmental arched windows providing indirect light to the *neem* and adjacent spaces. The large rectangular *neem* cellar is about 3.5 * 12 sq. m. and consists of a significant roof structure with four pointed arches inter-spaced by five shallow domes on triangular cross-ribbed pendentives (Fethi, 1977, p. 163). Four *badgeers* (wind catchers) ventilate the internal space of the *neem* cellar and are largely used by the family during siesta periods.



Figure 7.14: Images showing the main entrances of *Bayt Abaida* in *Al-Tell mahalla*, Kadhimiya-Baghdad, 1875; (Left): the entrance to the harem section, (Right): the entrance to the public zone

The upper storey of this part includes three *ursi* rooms, a colonnade *tarma*, many service spaces and a staircase, on its two long sides, leading to a *kabishkan* room in every corner. The ceiling of the *tarma*, *talars* and *ursi* rooms are highly decorated by polygonal interlaced and crisscrossed wooden patterns adorned by medallions of mirror mosaic at the centre reflecting the high social status of its owner. Arched niches and *muqarnased* cornice shape richly the internal walls of rooms and spaces on the upper level of the house. The courtyard is framed by a richly decorated wooden cornice in a hexagon motif adorned by medallions. Windows on the upper floor are richly and extensively harmonised reflecting largely the specific private nature of social spaces, they served. This distinction confirms the social settings of spaces. Courtyards' facades with their magnificent sash windows and the vertical interplay between spaces draw a panoramic picture emphasising the continuity and flexibility of spaces.

The request is to restore this significant architectural compound to its original form because it represents an outstanding example of traditional houses in Iraq as it embodies distinct architectural, cultural and historical values.

Socio-Spatial analysis of Internal Activities:

The main difference in the socio-spatial organisation of this house than previous cases is the presence of two courtyards around which houses' public, semi-public/private and private activities were arranged revealing two main divisions, the harem section and the public, or '*Diwankhana*', section. Despite the allocation of social spaces in two separate zones according to archival records, the private zone was often used as public especially in social events and celebrations. Males used sometimes this part in their social interactions with their peers from *mahalla* due to the presence of two *talars* and a spacious courtyard in addition to the closer location of the *talar* to the reception hall (*Barrani*) and the main entrance. An interviewee argued that the harem section, in public social events and festivities, was used as public while women used the *diwankhana* and upstairs as their own harem section. The socio-spatial transformation here is between entire regions rather than individual space. The location of the kitchen at the ground level of the small courtyard supports this argument and confirms its socio-functional essence. What refutes this argument is the lack of ladder connecting this part with the upper floor for the purpose of its use by women without passing through the other part as well as the direct contact between this part and the outside. Generally speaking, public and semi-public activities took place in the public zone (*Diwankhana*) and could be extended, in the case of public activities, rituals and social celebrations, to the harem zone while women using upper spaces. Guests and visitors of high and notable social status were, in specific cases, called for the main *talar*, on the south-west side of the large courtyard, through the south-eastern entrance and along the transitional area between the two parts. Social, cultural and functional settings of social spaces around the courtyards are largely similar to those in previous examples. Private and semi-private activities usually happen in the harem section (the large zone).

In spite of the good economic situation of the owner for the time being, he refuses to maintain the house because of the high value of the square metre in this context. The owner, according to my discussion with many users and interviewees, is waiting for the right time to demolish the house and build a new commercial building instead, as was the case for many other traditional houses. He expects, on the other hand, to obtain the appropriate financial compensation in the case of the demolition of the urban fabric surrounding the shrine of Imam Kadhimi (PBUH) according to the new redevelopment project.

7.1.8.3 Socio-Spatial Settings of low social class Families

Members of this group are of a high degree of social intimacy, hospitality and a sense of neighbourliness. People with a reputation of parsimony, within this social context, are described with a loss of social prestige and hospitality. These factors, as prominent values in Iraqi culture, can be largely identified in the simplified form of the hierarchical spatial organisation of the house with reference to this group. On this point, in my observation of this context and discussion with many of those interviewed, the main doors of these housing units are often left open during the day, with a curtain (*parda*) as a visual obstacle for the purpose of privacy, to provide welcome for visitors, especially females, and to ease and facilitate neighbours' social relationships and interactions. Last concept can be observed largely in initiating the neighbours, from the same group, to visit the family, in the absence of its head, to inquire about the actual needs of the family in that day, and even the return of the man. This gives an indication of the strength and simplicity of social relations between members of the same *mahalla*, and particularly within this class.

The organisation of space and social activities in this genre is not static or informal, compared to the previous group, due to the reflection of the spontaneous and intimate relations binding neighbours together and flexibility and simplicity in performing various activities. The house consists mainly of two or three-sided courtyard referring to the availability of space, plot's size and the economic and social status of the owner as well as the home location for the main alley. As a result, we can derive a primary sketch of the house, which usually consists of two main sections, reflecting public and private realms, with many spaces around or facing the central yard. Houses of this group are characterised by the presence of a sophisticated screen protruding from the upper space in the case of a good front. These elements are largely used by women in monitoring and controlling the public sphere of the alley and preventing, at the same time, the visual observation by the public from outside.

Monitoring traditional contexts in Kadhimiya, many parts of Baghdad and other cities shows that a staggering figure of households belongs to the lowest income groups who are mainly professional workers or private sector employees. Large proportions of them are tenants or sharing a home with other independent households. These homes are limited in terms of size and rooms' number (about 2-3 rooms) with a distinct lack of acceptable finishing or decorative features. Many of the homes, according to archival records and many scholarly studies, are inhabited by 3-5 independent families living together in the same house. Each family occupies

one multi-purpose room where living, eating, sleeping and sometimes even cooking takes place. All families share the same kitchen, bathroom and toilets. According to this and due to the current shortage of safe roads and secured public places, children are forced to use the house and the central courtyard as an arena to play and practise their different activities. These practices and the lack of a regular maintenance of the homes in addition to the effect of the nature of the obsolescence of traditional houses led to accelerating the physical deterioration of the housing units. This situation is, unfortunately, of great benefit to landlords in their attempts to replace these homes by lucrative commercial uses. Many houses have no elevation in the architectural sense of this term, but a small entrance (door) leads through a long corridor to a housing composition filling the remnants of neighbouring houses. Some of them have no courtyard in the traditional meaning of the *howsh*, but an open space, if it exists, filled with used furniture, livestock and working tools.

Investigation of the spatial organisation of these homes shows a simple arrangement of activities around the central square, where it exists, with a kitchenette and space for the shower. A traditional bread clay-oven '*tannoor*' takes largely place in a corner and is used by females to produce bread, or grilled food on certain occasions, as is the case in the house of Ridha Juma'a Al-Mussawi in *al-Krad mahalla* in the city of Hilla (Figure 7.15). According to the structural

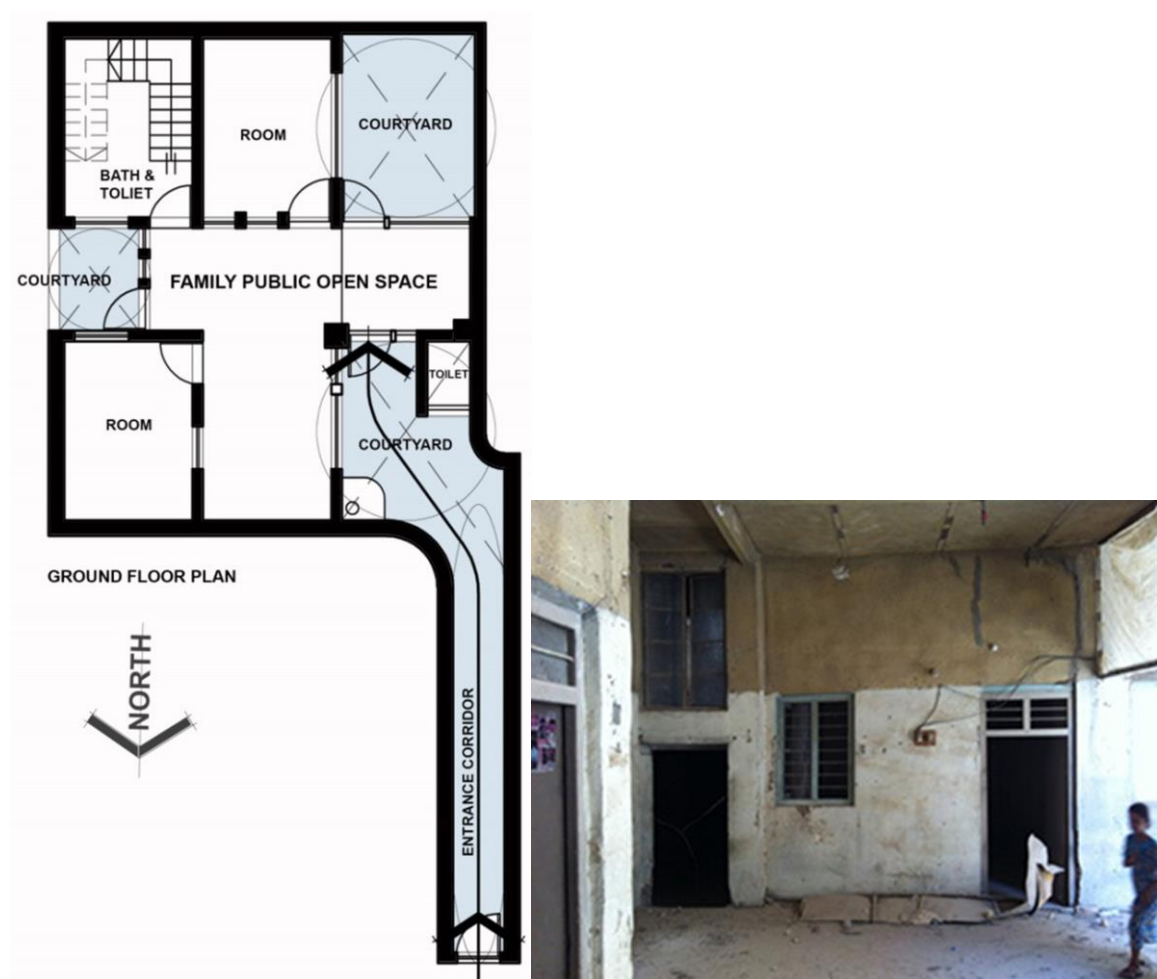


Figure 7.15: Plan and internal image of *Bayt* Ridha Al-Mussawi in *Al-Tell* mahalla, Kadhimiya-Baghdad, 1890 AD.

properties of this house and neighbouring units, it was built about 1890 AD. The house is composed of two levels. The ground floor includes a large multi-purpose open space, two bedrooms and space, in the opposite corner of the entrance, has a bathroom and a staircase leading to the first floor. The upper level consists of a corridor, surrounding the courtyard on its east and west sides, and two small bedrooms. The house includes two small skylights to provide good ventilation and sunlight to internal rooms. Many parts of its actual fabric are on the verge of collapse and are currently backed by wooden pillars.

In a visit to a house, owned by a friend '*Najem Al-Dabbagh*', I discovered that his children bathe in the space of the courtyard where a long curtain covering its width and breaking it down into two parts (Figure 7.16). In this house, a small reception room (*Barrani*) and a bedroom are located on both sides of the transitional corridor leading directly to the main *howsh*. An open *talar*, family room/bedroom, kitchen, bath/toilet and a narrow staircase leading both to an extra room above the kitchen and the roof, are all organised in a spontaneous manner around the open sphere of the courtyard. The latter is used as an open arena for the completion of service activities, bathing, children's practices and other social settings. The existence of a friendly relationship with the family head had allowed his mistress, in the case of veiled (*Hijab*), and his sons to come and greet me, asking me '*how life goes on with me*', and inviting me to stay for dinner. All that had happened since we were in the *talar*, sitting on a simple mat along its three sides with some pillows supporting our backs. It shows that people of this social class exchange and show a strong sense of solidarity, friendship, neighbourliness, simplicity and mutual coexistence, usually with whom they are of ethnic, tribal or sectarian ties.

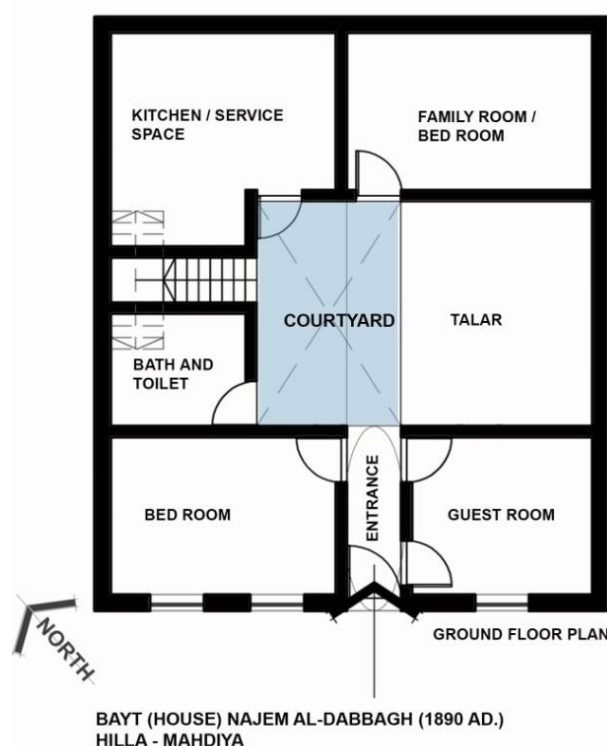


Figure 7.16: Plan and internal image of *Bayt* Najem Al-Dabbagh in the Mahdiya *mahalla*, Hilla-Iraq, 1910 AD.

The third case study consists of two levels where the upper one was collapsed. The remnants of wooden columns with muqarnased capitals, crumbling ceilings and degraded *shanashil* windows cover the first floor, making it vulnerable to collapse at any moment. The house was built around the 1880s, in the *Jamain mahalla* in the city of Hilla, facing the river of Hilla on the other side of the in-between street (Figure 7.17). The original ownership of the house belongs to Abbas Al-Marouf. The house, at the present time, is occupied by two independent families consisting respectively of 9 and 7 individuals. The house includes two courtyards which, in their original

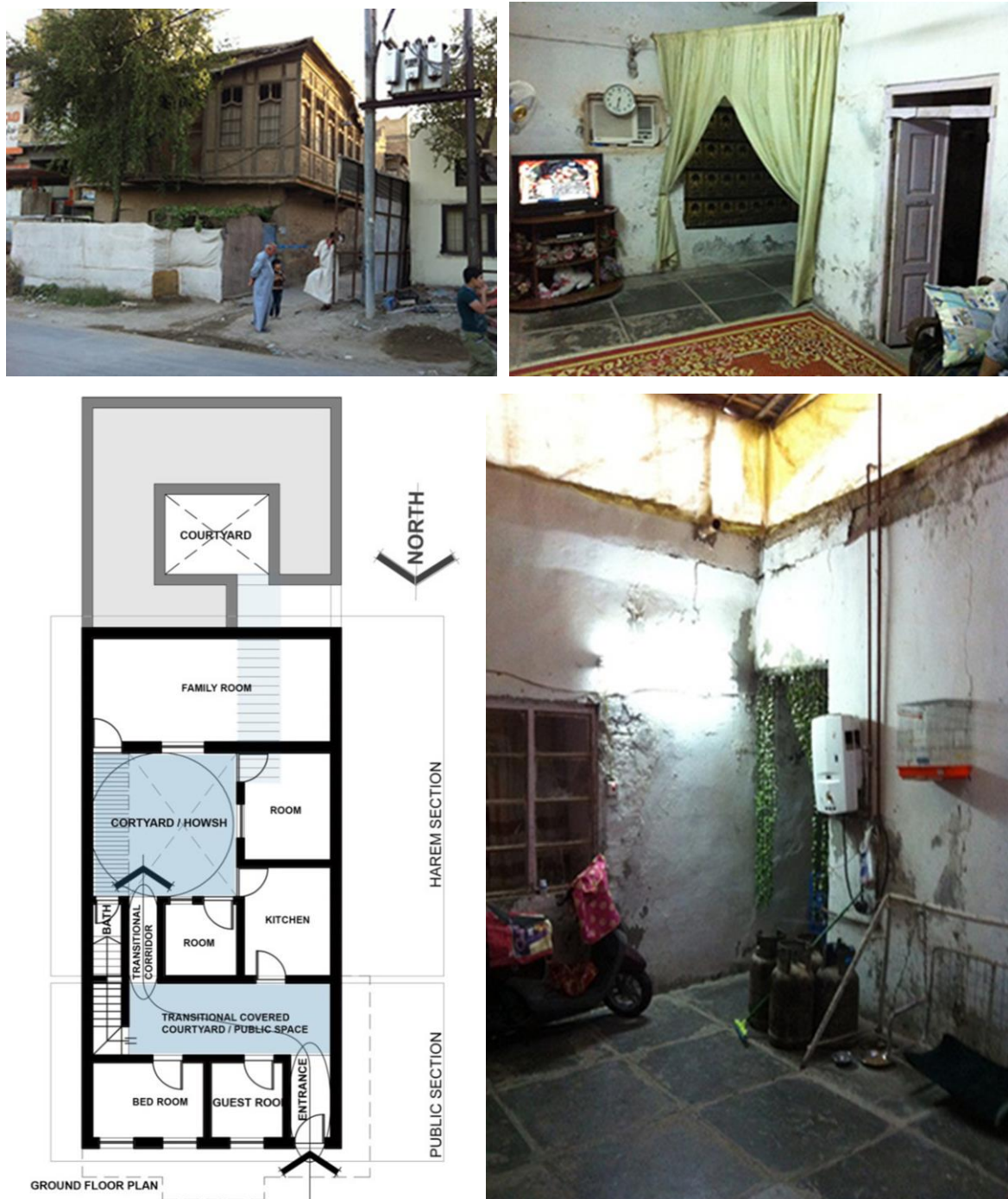


Figure 7.17: Ground plan, internal and external images of *Bayt Abbas Al-Marouf*, *al-Jamain mahalla*, Babylon-Iraq, 1890 AD. Upper-right image showing the multipurpose family space in the public zone of the house; Down-right image is showing part of the courtyard

composition, refer to two different social zones, the public section '*Diwankhana*' and the *harem* section. Transition link between these two parts has been closed to isolate the two families from each other.

The public zone, represented by the front part of the house confronting the river, includes an entrance space leading through a bent multi-purpose transitional zone to the *harem* section at the back. This space consists of a guest room and a bedroom on the north side of the transitional space, and a kitchen linking this space with the inner courtyard through two doors open respectively on each part. This space is currently used as a living zone, despite its public nature. The family space is also linked with the *howsh* (courtyard) through a small corridor covered by a curtain to isolate this zone socially and spatially from the *harem* section for providing a kind of privacy to the family on the other side in the case of public activities. There is no specificity in relation to spatial settings of this part as long as different social practices and actions can take place during the day. On certain occasions, public and semi-public practices can happen in this section and can be made through the kitchen or internal corridor. A small staircase, on its eastern side, leads to the collapsed upper floor. A small service space, as a toilet, is located under the stair and opens to the main courtyard. The second part represents the *harem* section with three rooms surrounding its central yard. A large room, on the south side of the yard covering its entire width, is used as a multifunctional living space. Praying, eating, sleeping, sitting and social intercourse are among the practices can be exercised in this space. Its floor is covered with mats and furnished with beds, wooden sofas, mattresses, blankets, wooden wardrobe and an old TV. By entering this space, I was asked to leave my shoes outside. The slot of the courtyard was closed by a wooden gabled roof with a cover of cloth for environmental purposes. Prominent architectural details of the elements of the collapsed upper floor reveal the considerable social status of its original owner.

Generally speaking, the architectural composition of these houses is limited to a multi-purpose family space with one or two bedrooms and a bathroom with a toilet area. The latter is usually separated and places sometimes out the built area of the house because of the availability of space. On the whole, men of these families are used to exercise their public affairs in coffeehouses or external public spaces due to, in addition to the availability of space, their limited income. Women, on the other hand, veil themselves and use the spatial domain of the alley around the entrance during the day to interact with each other in the absence of their men. In the case of a stranger, they hurry inside the transitional sphere of the entrance or veil themselves entirely facing the wall of the alley. The stranger, on the other hand, must continue to look toward the ground for the duration of passing space, as an ethical act or behaviour.

Synthesis: Reconstructed the Socio-Spatial Spectrum

Building on the previous review of the socio-spatial organisation of daily activities through this historical stage, it can be argued that the spatial structure of the house, during the first period and the first half of the 20th century, was more compatible with socio-cultural values, the concept of

privacy, the everyday life of its actors and the nature of Iraqi society as a whole. Its physical properties, spatial arrangement and architectural features limited, on the one hand, the ease of interactions between the outside world and the private sphere inside the house; and, on the other hand, employed strict socio-cultural factors and daily practices in a mutual and consensual relationship. Social conventions, lifestyle and social status played a major role in the emergence and continuation of this specific spatial system in the home compared with its settings in following periods. Its harmonious and compatible factors were originated from residents' high response to these principles in their interaction with the surrounding tissue. Any spatial or physical change in this structure leads straight to a change in the daily practices of people, preserving, thus, the principles on which this structure was formed. At the same time, any spatial or physical modification outside the house should be carried out on the basis of stringent regulatory standards and settings in no way affect the privacy and social life of the neighbour. These factors based on the outcome of centuries of change according to strict social values and solid cultural principles.

Socio-spatial division of internal spaces and the development of public activities in the front of the house with ease communication with the outside created some kind of balance between societal and personal factors. On the other hand, the form of connection between the two main divisions in the community, with respect to high and low social classes, relied on specific socio-spatial characteristics. Users of both divisions perceived the *mahalla* according to their social priorities, cultural standards and indigenous beliefs and considered it as their own big home. The continuation of this pattern was due to strong social and administrative structure in control of the daily affairs of society, inherent social relations and reliable spatial practices on the basis of solid regulatory law and sincere feeling of belonging through their representatives. This organisational process is reflected in the order of public and private spaces, particularly with regard to social factors, cultural principles, customs and traditions they represent. Within this context, the home and the *mahalla* accentuated a diversity of mutual concepts and daily conventions with an emphasis on a sense of neighbourliness, social intimacy and solidarity under the authority and control of community's heads and elders. Both territories were controlled by social, cultural, religious and political regulations which granted their members a sense of tranquillity, stability and safety. As a result, each individual, even if outside the limits of the *mahalla*, felt the presence of an authority or a power capable of protecting and defending him in the event of exposure to any problem or conflict. These settings have led to the creation of specific social and architectural identities which, according to the viewpoint of the majority of interviewees and architects, are in need of protection and maintenance. Moreover, shared social, cultural and physical factors, dominated the entire built environment during this period, have led to the formulation of a kind of collective identity guaranteed by individual's daily interactions and practices, as will be discussed in the next chapter.

Differences and similarities between high and low-profile households will be expressed in the following figure:

	Notable and High Social Class Families	Low- order social class Families
Architectural Properties	Located at the first belt surrounding the central core with a large plot-size	Located around the former or the periphery of the city
	Distinct and more decorated entrance Highly decorated architectural features, <i>shanashil</i> and <i>kabishkans</i>	Simple and more informal entrance Distinct lack of acceptable finishing or decorative features
	The <i>barrani</i> is in good connection with the entrance; and the presence of servants	The <i>barrani</i> , if exists, is in connection with the entrance and the outside
	The presence of two <i>talars</i> in most cases; and the <i>iwan</i> , in some of them	The presence of one <i>talar</i> with the absence of the space of the <i>iwan</i> in most cases
	Two or, at least, one highly organised courtyard, transitional corridors and services	One courtyard with the presence of service spaces within its realm
	The presence of the <i>ursi</i> , colonnade <i>tarma</i> and transitional c corridors and spaces before the sacred space of the bedrooms	Simple arrangement of spaces around the central yard with the absence of the <i>ursi</i> or the colonnade <i>tarma</i>
Socio-cultural aspects and everyday life routine	More formal socio-cultural relations with specific families	Easy socio-cultural relations, everyday practices and interactions with neighbours
	More formal neighbourly relations, with clear social intimacy and hospitality	High degree and reciprocal social intimacy, hospitality and a sense of neighbourliness
	Formalised and structured socio-spatial relations and connections	Spontaneous and more fluent socio-spatial relations, connections and interactions
	High degree of privacy, gender segregation and cohesive social solidarity and stability	Reasonable degree of privacy, gender segregation, social solidarity and stability
	Reasonable home and social life with specific high-profile and notable families	Weak home life compared with strong social life with all segments of society
	Strict activity-space-time relationship	Flexible activity-space-time relationship
	Rationally dynamic and more formal socio-spatial relations between users and the surrounding space	Highly dynamic and informal socio-spatial relations between the individual and the surrounding space
	A rationally constructive flexibility in performing social activities	High degree of flexibility and simplicity in performing various activities
	More formal, organised and determined borders between public, semi-public/private and private domains	Informal and more fluent borders between public, semi-public/private and private domains

Integrated social relations and organised daily practices created and preserved the concept of tradition through the production of a regular social system. These factors granted people a range of traditional rules and communication tools on which the individual regulates his social affairs. The socio-spatial structure of the built environment and its regularity affirmed the concept of tradition which ensured its continuity in accordance with people's awareness of inherited values. This continuity is the result of its association with or reliance on the social and cultural essence of traditional community. The time-space relationship is a major factor in the continuation of specific socio-cultural values. Therefore, interviewees refer always to traditional factors, ethics and behaviour as guiding principles in criticising contemporary relations. Despite the impact of modernity, political conflicts, economic changes and socio-cultural contradictions, the continuity of daily practices, traditions, customs and rituals practised by inhabitants of traditional contexts emphasises people's social relations with each other and the mutual socio-spatial interplay with the surrounding environment.

7.2. Part II: Socio-Spatial Analysis of the Home (1918-2003)

After analysing the socio-spatial settings of the traditional *mahalla* and the architecture of the home during the previous period with reference to society's socio-cultural aspects and the daily life of its members, I will continue in discussing the development of home during this period to find out how society organised itself and dealt with modernity on one side and socio-cultural changes on the other side. This will be checked from both social and spatial dimensions to approach research main aim and inquiries concerning the impact of underlying socio-cultural factors in the organisation of space relating to public/private realms. Previous analysis has covered the historical evolution of Iraqi society and the main factors influenced its social nature and conservative ideology. This part will discuss the impact of rural and Bedouin values, as influential factors in the social fabric of society, on community's priorities and the beliefs of its members. Before going into the socio-spatial analysis of the house, it is necessary to highlight the influence of modern values in the production of new social and institutional structure.

7.2.1. The New Social Structure of Society

Physical changes in traditional contexts due to new development projects in the city of Kadhimiya and other parts of Baghdad destroyed the hierarchy of spatial organisation or harmony of its quarters. Implementing these changes ignored to a large extent the social and cultural aspects of its population and disregarded *the vitality of the organically grown social entities* (Bianca, 1993, p. 194). The rational concept of modernity, upon which these changes have been managed and operated, cracked the rigid introverted concept of the traditional house and sub-divided the local structure into separate components for the production of a new one in accordance with the rules and principles of the new functional and highly artificial mechanism. This system or mechanism, as well as social changes already mentioned, led to a lack of internal social cohesion and solidarity of society, which has become under the influence of external controlling factors. It affected individual's beliefs and ethics, and reduced the self-reliance policy of former contexts. It emphasised moreover *pervasive cultural fragmentation and social disintegration, rejecting social ... assumptions concerning the coherence of traditional society and, in extreme cases, the very concept of the social* (Antonio and Kellner, 1994, p. 127).

New social, cultural and physical changes destroyed the existing and inherited social structure, and the informal tissue of cohesive social relations and mutual responsibilities. Recent factors have been replaced by abstract and very formal principles ignoring, thus, individual's socio-cultural aspects. They marginalised and weakened the common values of the old social structure which were preserved, over centuries, through the promotion of integral human relations of social cohesion, social interaction, mutual commitment and solidarity between neighbours or members of the *mahalla*. These concepts had been achieved through the mutual acceptance of a series of ethics and social principles, practically reflected in people's behaviour and daily practices. By contrast, the people, according to new values, have been neglected and squeezed through a variety of social, cultural, political and economic constraints more than inherited rules

and conventions. The traditional social structure began, under the influence of these constraints, in the loss of the legitimacy of its authority and the extent of its control with respect to society's noble values or moral principles.

The role of the individual and the traditional legal system, within the framework of the new social order, had been frozen for the benefit of inconsistent official policies on the basis of accredited Western institutions. This case was clearly manifested after the fifties of the last century when new governments, rather than inhabitants, have started to indicate or recruit community members whose main affiliations are to the central institutional system instead of the local. People, therefore, have begun to rely on governmental rules and principles in resolving their conflicts and disputes more than the timeless conventions of the *shari'a* (religious law) that characterised traditional contexts. After 1979, the traditional social order was entirely demolished, and its components had been pursued and prosecuted, especially religious scholars and *shaqawat* (*mahalla's* protectors), for their presence had become a source of threat to the ruling dictatorial regime.

7.2.2. Socio-Spatial Order of the New *Mahalla* (Neighbourhood unit)

As a consequence to the new administrative concept and institutional framework, new methods of spatial organisation and physical planning are introduced to keep up with these social changes. The problem is that modern concepts, objectives and procedures were imposed as ready models in different social and cultural contexts. This process had caused many conflicts in relation to the internal system of the society. The architecture of new residential districts ignored to a large extent the benefits of the effective participation of different social groups in society. Socio-cultural factors, human aspects and people's everyday practices, which represented key factors and essential tools in the formation of traditional communities, have been eliminated during the implementation of the master plan for new neighbourhoods. These plans were abstract to the extent that they could not be understood or actively interacted by users. They threatened society's common values and interrelated relations among its members. They affected the organic and harmonious character of the traditional urban fabric and inherent social constraints that produced, over a long period of time, *an organic whole out of the sum of individual acts of building* (Bianca, 1993, p. 198). The extreme social and cultural dissonance of modernity was imposed through implementing incongruent specifications and alien socio-cultural elements and forms in terms of formal and comprehensive structural schemes. Accordingly, human commitments, social norms and agreements were replaced by ready building regulations and codes to adjust the social life of people in modern quarters. They affected the reasonable application of the concept of self-reliance in the traditional example. Movement system, plots' layout and by-law's concepts violated the intimate notion of privacy, social interaction and solidarity, and destroyed largely cohesive social bonds that characterised traditional society.

Changes, occurred in the city of Kadhimiya and most Iraqi traditional and new-designed contexts, tended to disperse the integrated urban tissue to separate functional components

according to several technical characteristics rather than human principles and social factors. Interrelated human actions were disconnected by the implementation of the concept of functional separation, through which new modern tools were called to replace inherent social and cultural aspects. The traditional urban fabric had been torn by a network of over-dimensioned roads that caused further disruption in the unified and coherent social concept of its different quarters and the extended social nature of the *mahalla*. The establishment of the *Zahra'a* Street, for example in the city of Kadhimiya, that breaking through its organically grown and coherent urban fabric, reinforced the concept of the boulevard in the 19th century as a dominant planning device for new developments. This perspective contrasts dramatically with the spatial and physical organisation of the traditional urban fabric where the [Man] and his cultural values have played a key role in organising space and reflected a high degree of diversity and complexity. Moreover, public spaces were allocated to and tied up in an integrated relation with specific architectural components; such as the mosque, khans, *hammams* (local baths) and private houses which, therefore, were isolated from the public movement system. The hierarchical order of this system enhanced greatly the factor of privacy, where each section reflects and perpetuates the nature of the specific zone, it served, and the social characteristics of its users. On the contrary, modern movement network, where the new mode of transport plays a major factor in its organisation, led to split up the urban form and provided, therefore, mere movement patterns ignoring the socio-cultural values of the human. The result is separate residential sectors and volumes dissected by a gridiron pattern of streets.

Eventually, individuals' mutual relations within the social concept of *mahalla* were entirely ignored in the implementation of new residential quarters. The concept of inclusiveness in the traditional *mahalla*, where the various interrelated components of urban life were engaged in the hierarchical structural level, had broken down and replaced by modern disaggregated sectoral zones. The latter affects the spatial organisation of internal subdivisions, where each individual component or social group could track their socio-spatial values and exercise their daily lives in an integrated and self-sufficient social entity. The reasonable and meaningful application of inherited socio-cultural aspects, the concept of privacy and gender segregation and, thus, the clear socio-spatial division between private, semi-private/public and public realms have been lost by poor and rationally constructive formalised planning settings of the new neighbourhood. Latter properties have destroyed the harmonious sequential system of social spaces from the most public to the ultimate private, upon which the traditional form maintained its sustainability, and have led, therefore, to a massive social disintegration or exclusion. The stratification of families, according to many social, economic and political determinants, has its negative impact on the concept of social cohesion, neighbourliness and daily life. This has affected the concept of self-sufficiency in new neighbourhoods. This factor can clearly be seen in Haifa Street Development project and *Suq* Hamada residential complex. A big social gap has been emerged between households' living, respectively, in new residential buildings or housing units and those occupying the surrounding old tissue as a result of the differences in social classes. Therefore, families began to identify their social relations to be with a particular and similar social group avoiding, in

turn, any contact with other social classes. To support this, an interviewee, in the city of Kadhimiya, mentioned that:

“For more than two months, a new family rented a nearby house. My relationship with the head of the family, until this moment, is limited to the greeting when I, accidentally, meet him in the street or *mahalla*. Otherwise, I do not even know his name or what exactly works. That cannot be happening earlier as long as the entire *mahalla* was considered as one extended family. Political, economic and security factors have a significant impact on people's behaviour and social priorities. This case is very simple compared with what happens between the families living at the same level in residential buildings in Haifa Street” [I5.11.14].

This stratification is withdrawn on the mosque which is often situated in a total isolation from the residential quarter and frequented by a certain social group compared with the old traditions and Islamic rules and principles upon which the mosque represents the place that bringing together all people and integrating all aspects of public life. In my performance for the *Juma'a* prayer, I was informed by a friend to avoid frequenting the local mosque of the *mahalla* as long as its most patrons are of lower and unknown social classes. He, therefore, accompanied me to another mosque where, as he said, most of its users are from indigenous and good social status families. This example and the reasons behind it are beyond the scope of the study, but they give an indication of how social and cultural values have been changed and, therefore, affected people's social relations, daily practices and rituals.

Upon inquiry about the role of social factors in the architecture of new residential districts, 73% of architects, planners and sociologists indicate their opposition to their role compared with their full agreement with respect to traditional quarters. Other segments of the questionnaire supported this result as their opinions came to a large extent compatible with previous segments and promoted the prominent role of these factors in the traditional context rather than the contemporary. A resident of *Suq* Hamada district described the social suffering of his family in this district. He pointed out, and preferred not to mention his name, that:

“Although it was due to the implementation of these units are defined for a specific social group and planned for people of similar professional sectors, but, in fact, we couldn't, within the fifteen years, we have spent in this region under Saddam Hussein's regime, keep our freedom in the practice of a normal social life. Moreover, we cannot criticise social, cultural, political or economic affairs, people face, even among us, as a family, at least. We appease heavily on the account of our personal convictions and beliefs and demonstrate well about the situation of the community. At the same time, we used to reject any invitation from our neighbours fearing from any word might be accounted against us. Therefore, we lived in an attractive residential area which was designed and built according to specific architectural and historical standards, but we, as the main users, lack a sense of vitality and tranquillity. After 2003, we were considered as the men

of the former regime. That's why we are now looking for protection from the Iraqis themselves" [I32.9.14].

This argument shows largely the success of this residential area in the use and application of inherited traditional spatial and physical characteristics. However, the absence of active daily practices and social relations and interactions with surrounding contexts had a significant impact in its failure to meet intangible needs and requirements of its inhabitants. This project and other cases will be socio-spatially discussed and analysed in following parts to build on their benefits and deficiencies, compared with traditional contexts, the main aim and conclusions of the study.

7.2.3. Socio-Spatial Analysis of the Modern Home

"The Modern Movement tended to design buildings in a vacuum and to produce isolated blocks floating in an abstract urban space emptied of all its essential qualities" (Bianca, 1993, p. 207).

Individual house in new-designed districts does not contribute to defining or determining the basic meaning of public spaces with reference to the overall concept for the distribution of activities that have been created by the architect, who aims to provide greater aesthetic variety. Homes are detached according to pre-imposed planning's subdivisions and streets' order. Each unit is spatially treated in a different and separate arrangement reflecting planning and contextual criteria rather than internal social needs, cultural entities and the everyday life of its users. In such arrangement, the external hierarchical order of space is diminished and ignored in connection with the internal order which affects the socio-cultural aspects of each family, the daily life of the population and the ultimate privacy required.

Within this context, means of communication with the outside world and the organisation of interior spaces will be discussed and analysed with respect to public/private realms and family's socio-cultural principles and beliefs. Analysis of the socio-spatial relation in the architecture of the house in this period will depend on two types of evidence. The first includes the socio-spatial analysis of the four houses covering the first half of the 20th century. One of these cases, Hummadi Siger's house, is located within the organic tissue of the traditional context in the city of Hilla while the others are related to many families who left, or were forced to leave, this tissue after the demolition of their units due to new development projects. The second evidence consists of two residential developments in the eighties of the last century, represented in the development project of Haifa Street and *Suq* Hamada residential district. Both were designed for specific social categories and in accordance with the resolution from highest authorities. The analysis of the first group was based on personal reconnaissance and surveillance as well as information obtained from current residents and those who were interviewed. Sources of the second set relied on plans and drawings found in Baghdad Municipality, scholarly studies, archival records and some informal and warned discussions, held with many users and passers-by, due to a variety of security determinants. The point in reading different types of houses is the revealing of the

influence of the changes in social factors, cultural values, daily practices, traditions and norms on the architecture of the house compared with conventional cases. This method will build an inclusive view of the vitality and sustainability of the traditional model. Results of this analysis will shed light on how the optimal implementation of these factors in traditional contexts introduced or displayed a specific identity and led to a more sustainable built environment. They give, moreover, an image of the change in community's socio-cultural aspects and practices.

7.2.3.1. *Bayt (House) Hashim Witwit in the Hilla (1921 AD)*

According to archival records of the State Board of Antiquities and Cultural Heritage in Iraq, this house was built around (1921) by Mr. Hashim Witwit whose origins attributed to the Prophet Mohammad (PBUH). This honourable pedigree gives him a distinct social and moral status in the community of Hilla. Afterwards, the house was transferred to his descendants and is currently closed and offered for rent (Figure 7.18).



Figure 7.18: Images showing the master plan, the external façade and the courtyard in *Bayt* Hashim Witwit, Krad *mahalla*, Hilla-Iraq, 1921

Due to the outstanding location of the house in a commercial district, four shops were built on the front side of the house blinding its main façade and leaving a small entrance in between. The house is located in the Krad *mahalla* outside the spontaneous fabric of the old zone. The built area of the house (about 300 sq.m.) covers the entire width of the plot (about 462 sq.m.) and mediates its depth, leaving two small open spaces in the front and rear of the built part isolating it respectively from the main street and neighbour.

Architectural Description:

This house represents an excellent example of the beginnings of change in the architectural and structural standards after the 1st World War, indicating the influence of modernity and Western trend in architecture. The main façade of the house is located towards the south, facing, on the other side of the main street, the traditional fabric of Krad *mahalla*. A wide terrace, as a recession in the frontage of the built part, is used as an open transitional space to the internal private zone of the house in its relation to the public sphere of the main street. The house consists of one main level and basement which is currently closed and filled with water due to its proximity to Hilla River (Figure 7.19).

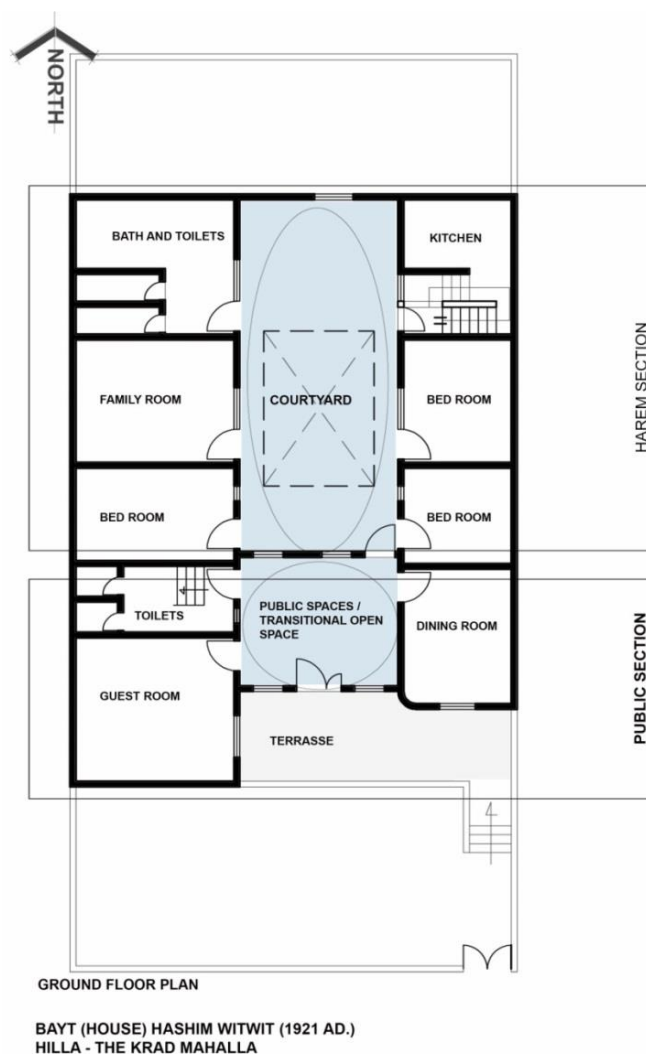


Figure 7.20: The ground floor plan of Bayt Hashim Witwit, Krad *mahalla*, Babylon-Iraq, 1921 AD.

The house includes two main sections reflecting the nature of family's social activities. The first zone, in the front part of the house, is the public zone (*Diwankhana*), which accommodates public activities and practices, meetings and social rituals and traditions. This part consists of a reception hall, dining room and service space, including toilets, distributed on both sides of its main covered transitional space. A rectangular form wooden door mediates the southern part, with a rectangular window on either side of the main door. The north side of the covered courtyard has a single door on the right side, linking this section with the harem zone in the back, and two windows on the left of the door. Spatial organisation of the courtyard in this part reflects the transitional concept of the bent entrance in the traditional house. The harem section contains four rooms, kitchen and service space, including bath and toilet on its back corners. These spaces are arranged in parallel along a central courtyard with an opening to the rear garden, mediating the northern wall. The main courtyard was closed by an iron structure covered with panels to protect the house environmentally. Social and cultural factors are not far from this physical amendment. I heard a strange story from one of the interviewees, for the reasons behind covering the opening of the courtyard in the traditional house. He stated that:

“A famous person had decided to cover the courtyard of his house. He said, when he was asked about the reason, that ‘... *his women were always unveiled in the courtyard where British planes often fly over it. These people were shameless and with not modesty and could take a look at his women during the flight.*’ The strangest is that one of the descendants of this person, at the end of the twentieth century, had been chosen as University's Beauty Queen during her studies at the American University in Beirut-Lebanon” [I24.8.14].

This story indicates and shows the great change in social and cultural factors of Iraqi society, and how these factors, in a certain period and under specific circumstances, can affect the structure of the house.

In general, the design of Hashim Witwit's house depends largely on tripartite longitudinal strips where the courtyard occupies its central one. The house is built of firebrick and lime where internal walls are covered with white plastering. The ceiling of the terrace is covered with the brick in a mat-like (*Hasiri*) style. All roofs are constructed of arched panels of brick reinforced by iron beams in between. The upper front parapet is of brick in different decorative patterns strengthened by brick pillars.

Socio-Spatial Analysis of Internal Activities:

Public and semi-public activities take place in the front section of the house, including the guest room, as a reception hall (*Barrani*), and the dining room, where each of them is located on a side of the transitional space. This arrangement shows the beginnings of the spatial separation of activities with respect to their functional settings. The dining space is largely served by family members while guests and visitors are in the reception hall. Despite this separation, praying and sleeping can also take place in these spaces according to how cold or warm space is during the

year and the extent of its purity and cleanliness. The reception hall needs always to be cleared and purified for the completion of these activities and the daily reception of visitors. Private and semi-private activities take largely place in the harem section. The main courtyard is significantly used for social interactions among family members and neighbours invited. Many social, functional and service activities can be done in this spacious zone during the day. In the case of a family visit, females take firstly their way to the harem section, followed by the men preceded with frequent calls, 'give-away (give permission)', from the family head. In this behaviour, he gives a warning to any woman, who is still in the public zone, to speed up access to the section of the harem or wear hijab.

In the case of outdoor social activities or religious rituals, specifically in *Ashoora'a* (on the 10th day of the month of Muharram in the Islamic calendar), family females and neighbours veil themselves and stand at the front of the house and the terrace watching the performance of external rituals and traditions. The veil or the Islamic cloak keeps and preserves the privacy of women, and prevents any visual interference from outsiders. Moreover, it is socially and morally unacceptable from anyone trying to take a look at any woman in these circumstances. Overall, the spatial organisation of the house reflects the conventions and standards of the previous phase and conservative nature of Iraqi society.

7.2.3.2. Bayt (House) Hummadi Siggar Al-Hassan in Hilla (1920s)

Historical Background:

This outstanding example is located on a corner within the organic fabric of the *mahalla* of *Al-Mahdiya* in the context of the old city of Hilla, with a total built area of about (527 sq. m.) distributed vertically into two main sections. The house has (16.5 m.) long north-west façade overlooking the main alleyway and (14 m.) long south-west facade facing a dead-end alley (*agd*). The house consists of two parts, the public section (*Diwankhana*) and the private section (*Harem*). The latter occupies the back of the house, which opens onto a semi-public area of the dead-end alley in its narrow end while the entrance to the public section confronts the main street. The other three sides are adjacent to neighbouring houses with different building heights. The two parts are currently non-correlated with each other and used separately for the accommodation of two different families. According to the architectural features and structural properties, this superb house was supposedly built around the (1920s) by Jasim Siggar. The spatial organisation of the house confirms the high social status of its owner in the community of Hilla. The presence of a large number of cooking utensils in the open space of the main yard of the *Diwankhana* gives the impression of the status of the owner in the social and religious events. *Ownership* of the house was then transferred to his son who currently occupies the public part while the harem quarter is used by an independent family.

Architectural Description:

The house consists of two main courtyards in reference to the social nature of each part. The entrance door of the harem section is connected with the main courtyard through a transitional bent space (Figure 7.20). This part includes two levels. The ground level consists of two colonnade *talars*, a spacious reception hall (*Barrani*), which is currently used by the family as living space, three bedrooms, a kitchen and service spaces. The main south-east *talar* is about (18 sq. m.) and is associated with a room at the back through *ursi* windows. The upper floor consists of a colonnade *tarma*, on the south-east side, and a balcony, surrounding the yard on three sides and is linked with a *talar* to the south-west side, and the roof. The main south-east *tarma* is about (23 sq. m.), and takes the same formal composition for the main one on the ground floor. *Talars* and *tarmas* of this part and the *Diwankhana* consist of two circular concrete columns with capitals superbly decorated with floral motif patterns and circular curved bases as a beautiful metaphor of the Art Nouveau pattern in modern architecture. The *ursi* window in each level consists of four modular wooden-framed glass panels, which provide day light to the room at the back of the *talar* or *tarma*. Each composition includes a double door and windows' openings which can be opened during summer times to ventilate the room by the movement of convection currents (Figure 7.21).

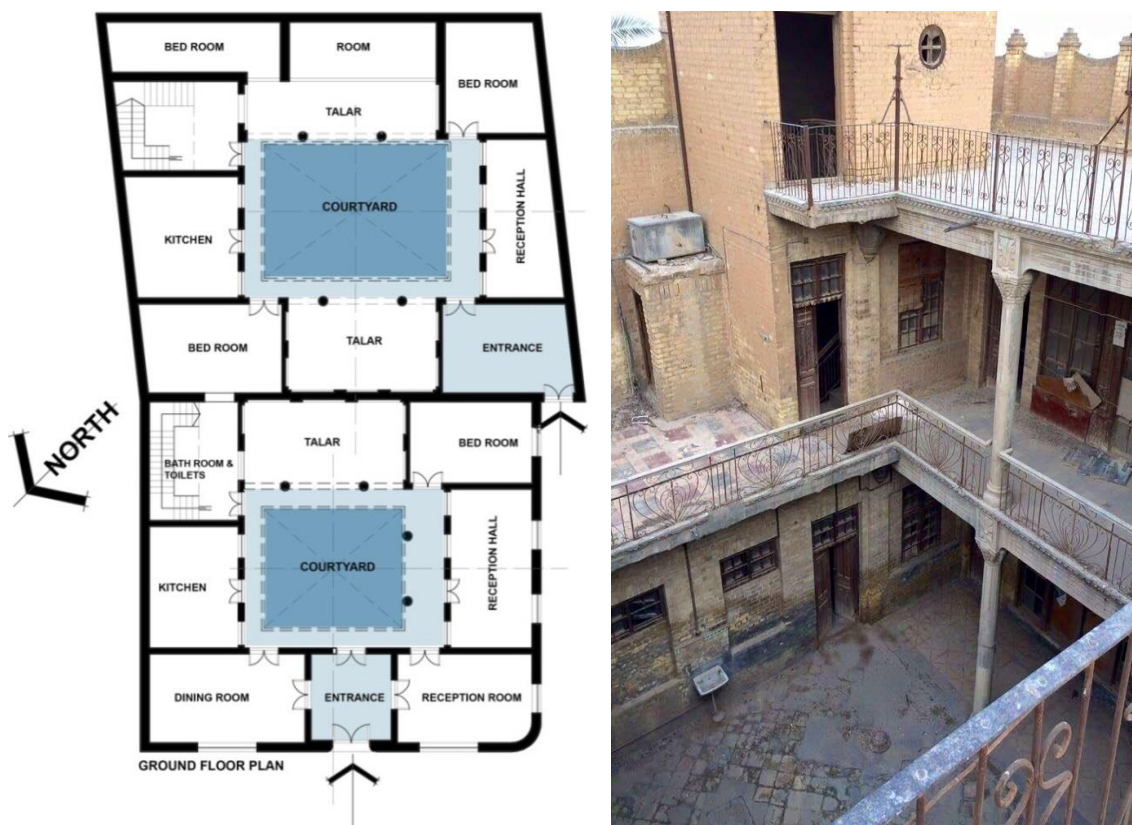


Figure 7.20: The ground floor plan and the main entrance door of *Bayt Jasim Sigar*, Mahdiya *mahalla*, Babylon-Iraq, 1920s

The courtyard of the *Diwankhana* is about (51.5 sq. m.) and connects with the public realm of the main alley through a direct transitional space with two doors' openings on its opposite sides.

Socio-spatial relation with the outside has been reduced to a simple form to prevent any direct visual contact with the inside through offsetting the corridor or creating another door, as a second barrier, behind the main entrance door. The entrance leads to a reception room (*Barrani*) and a dining room, which is used at present as an additional bedroom, on its sides. The courtyard is surrounded by a colonnade *talar*, a spacious family room, a bedroom, a kitchen and service spaces with a staircase inside.

Roof construction depends on I-shaped iron beams filled with vaulted brick construction in a multiform mat-like arrangement. The opening of the courtyard is framed by highly-detailed cement strips and guarded by a wrought-iron balustrade in floral motif decorations. The bottom of all doors' openings in both sections includes a double wooden door with small windows above to provide daylight to spaces behind. The outer façade of the house is crowned by a parapet of brick panels in multiform mat-like (*Hasiri*) arrangement, supported by brick pillars and sandwiched between two striped protrusions encircling the upper part of the façade. Two wide windows confront the main alley with five small windows occupy the space between the main door and the parapet, as strips surrounding the house and providing daylight to internal spaces.



Figure 7.21: Images of the courtyard in *Bayt Jasim Sigar*, Mahdiya *mahalla*, Babylon-Iraq, showing the architectural style of internal elements

Spatial arrangement, architectural details and decorations reflect a certain stage in the evolution of modern architecture. House represents a prominent architectural and cultural milestone, and reflects appreciably the Art Nouveau trend in architecture, making it one of the outstanding examples chronicling this pattern. Therefore, it is advisable to officially protect and keep the house.

Socio-Spatial Analysis of Internal activities:

Private and semi-private activities take place on the ground level of the harem section between the spacious family space and the *talar* which are linked through the courtyard. Females, in this case, are faced less disruption, compared with other houses, as they usually take their way from the semi-public alley through the entrance and the central courtyard to the living space and the *talar*, where different social actions, daily practices, rituals and traditions take largely place in. The

upper floor is used by females, in the case of public celebrations that can expand spatially to this section, and is connected with the public section through the roof. Public and semi-public activities are taken place in the front zone (*Diwankhana*), which is separated from the harem zone in order to enhance the privacy of the family. The two parts are linked together through a door in the space of the entrance in the harem section in order to serve the public zone in case of public activities. Otherwise, both parts are used by the family and its extended subdivisions.

At the present time, the two parts are separated completely and used for the accommodation of independent families. The performance of public and private activities in each part is similar to those that are discussed in previous cases. The only break of the privacy of the family comes from the absence of the bent nature of the transitional entrance in the front section, which displays the family into direct contact with the outside world in case of opening opposite doors. Moreover, the presence of two wide windows on its north-eastern façade confronting the public domain of the main alley exposes the family to the possibility of auditory or visual contact with the outside world. These treatments represent the influence of modern architecture at the beginning of the 20th century. Otherwise, there is no specific evidence to suggest clear differences in the practice of private/semi-private activities from traditional norms and rituals that have been analysed in the previous phase.

7.2.3.3. Bayt (House) Abd Al-Wahab Marjan in Hilla (1946 AD)

Historical description:

According to its architectural details, constructional method and archival records, this outstanding house was built around 1946 by Abd Al-Wahab Marjan. It was then transferred to his descendants. Currently, it is owned by the same family who meets on an on-going basis to discuss family matters. This family is one of the richest in the community of Hilla and Iraq as well. Its currently head is trying to keep the house in its original conditions as a respectable identity of the family. Abd Al-Wahab Marjan was considered as one of the prestigious personalities in the town of Hilla in particular and Iraq in general. He served as a speaker of the state during the monarchical rule. He was one of the characters that liked to allocate parts of their expenses and many charities to serve people and the poor improving their social and economic situation as well as the construction of hospitals and mosques.

According to archival records of the State Board of Antiquities and Cultural Heritage, the house is one of the outstanding historical buildings. It is located in the Krad *mahalla* in the old city of Hilla. The house faces the banks of Hilla River and occupies an area of about 1000 sq. m. The builder of the house was 'Usta Kareem' (a resident of the city of Hilla), who spent nearly two years to complete the work and be in its current appearance. The house includes two main sections with two covered courtyards in a double-volume style accommodating the entire vertical height of the house. The main part, facing the river, represents the public section '*Diwankhana*' which is mainly used for public activities, social practices and celebrations (Figure 7.22). The second zone

is located at the back of the first one and represents the harem section in its uttermost privacy. The spatial organisation and architectural arrangement of the house reflect inherited norms and traditions and Islamic principles with clear Western influence.



Figure 7.22: The front façade and the main door of *Bayt Marjan*, Krad *mahalla*, Hilla.

Architectural Description:

The street front of the house situates towards the north, facing the Hilla River, and the south, confronting the old fabric of the Krad *mahalla*. The house rises from the street level and is accessible by a staircase. Main north façade consists of three semi-circular arches supporting the covered terrace on the upper floor. The west elevation includes three circular iron columns carrying the porch on the north-west corner of the house. The roofs of these balconies settle on many small concrete columns. The house consists of two levels with a thick-ironed entrance door, decorated with patterns of floral motifs, and a small balcony guarded by iron balustrade above the entrance. This balcony is linked with the inside through three narrow semi-circular doors with floral motifs' decorations and glass, revealing the dominance nature of the main entrance. The main door leads, through a rectangular form transitional space and wooden-framed glass door, to the central arena (covered courtyard) of the *Diwankhana*. This part consists of a number of large rooms, service spaces, a staircase, toilets and bathrooms. A large reception hall, on the eastern side of the central space, is associated with the courtyard through three rectangular form wooden-framed glass doors. It opens, at the same time, to the front terrace through a wooden door and two wide rectangular form windows. The central courtyard is connected with the front terrace through a wooden door, while with the west terrace through an iron-framed glass door. Ceilings of the two terraces and outer *tarmas* are covered, with a high precision, by brick in a mat-like (*Hasiri*) style. Internal walls and ceilings of internal spaces and the courtyard are covered with white plastering, with one or more tripartite circular protrusions in plastered striped form. This finishing mediates the ceiling of each space and manifests the central anchors, used for hanging fans and chandeliers (Figure 7.23).

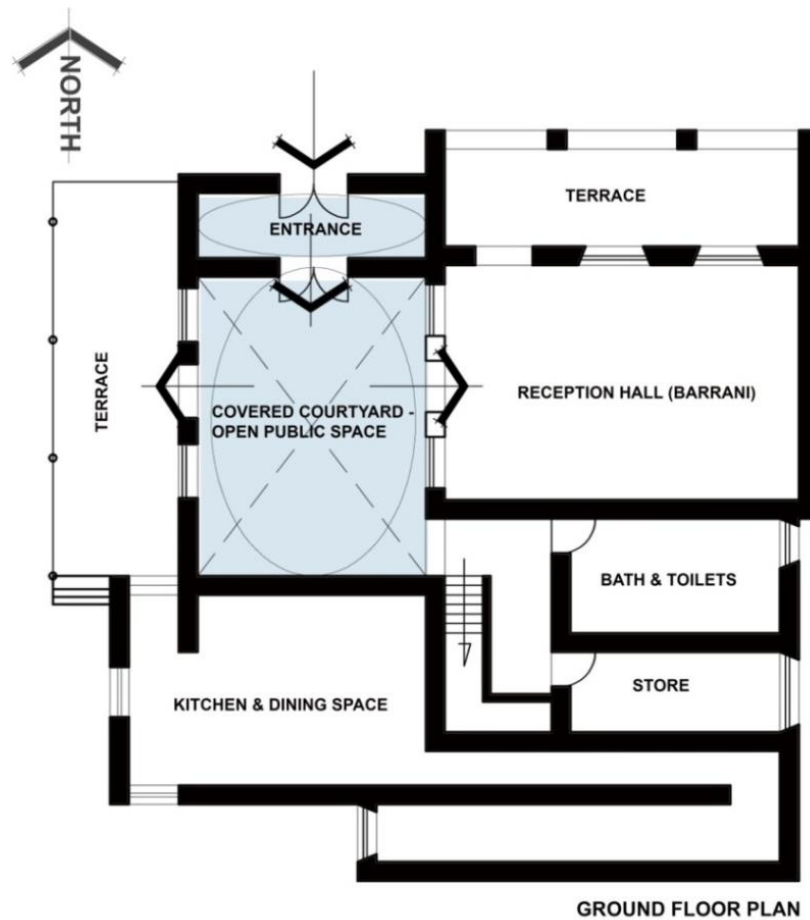


Figure 7.23: The ground floor plan of the public zone (*Diwankhana*) of *Bayt* (House) Marjan, Krad *mahalla*, Babylon.

The upper floor of this section includes two *tarmas* with circular columns and iron balustrade with a wooden handrail. These *tarmas* are opened to the external balconies through large wooden-framed glass doors. The large room, on the east side of the courtyard above the reception hall, is significantly used to house notable guests and visitors or children and female in the case of public ceremonies and practices. This space includes three semi-circular wooden-framed doors leading to small semi-circular balconies guarded by an iron balustrade with wooden handrail (Figure 7.24). This architectural treatment gives women and children the ability to monitor public practices and traditions, occurred at ground level, reflecting, to some extent, the social settings of the *ursi* in traditional examples. The form, location and architectural features of this house were designed and developed in utmost beauty and creativity reflecting the wealth and high social status of the owner. General spaces, around the central courtyard on its both levels, are still furnished with indigenous elements such as the large wall watch, crystal chandeliers, sleeping beds and mattresses, richly wooden chairs and sofas and fans. Moreover, traditional highly-decorated wooden fireplace mediates the covered courtyard and faces the main entrance.



Figure 7.24: Images of the small internal balconies in *Bayt* (House) Marjan, Krad *mahalla*, Hilla.

The Harem section is located at the back of the *Diwankhana* and is devoted to the residence of the family. This part has been latterly renovated and maintained without making any substantial changes to its original features. It includes many bedrooms, corridors, a kitchen, baths, toilets and many service spaces. There are eight bathrooms; eight toilets and two stairs at home in both sections. Four sirdabs (basements) and large food stores are located on the bottom floor, which was created using walls of refractory bricks and lime bonds. The archival records show that the building materials and coloured tiles, used to create the house, were imported from Syria and Lebanon, referring to the powerful situation of the owner at that time (Figure 7.25).

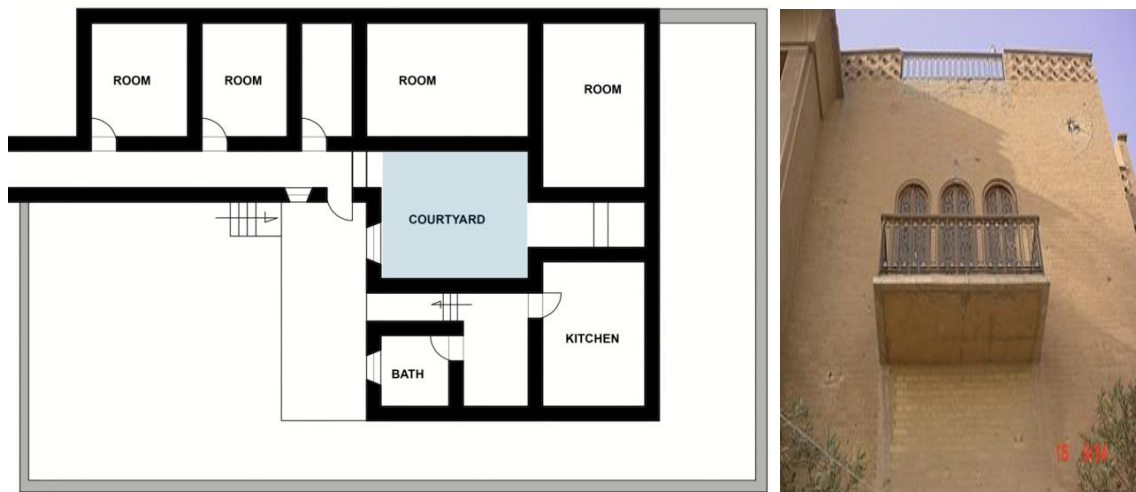


Figure 7.25: The ground floor plan of the harem section and an image of the external balcony in *Bayt* Marjan

Socio-Spatial Analysis of Internal Activities:

Bayt Marjan is of great importance in terms of its spatial containment of public events and social practices, rituals and daily life. A separate section for the completion of public practices and traditions has been spatially and functionally organised and designed to achieve the ultimate

degree of privacy for women in their own region. In addition to this architectural division, the upper level of the *Diwankhana*, *tarmas* and balconies can also be used, as mentioned earlier, by women while wearing their traditional hijab in certain public activities, such as marriage ceremonies and new-born circumcision's rituals '*Tohoor*' taking place in the central courtyard. However, this section must be fully cleared and ordered to receive the expected guests and visitors at any moment during the day.

Historically speaking, the house shows an outstanding example of the changes in the architecture of home in Iraq because of the obvious influence of modernism and Western architectural principles on its architectural and physical features. These effects are largely shown in the simplicity of the architectural details of its front facades and internal components in comparison with traditional examples. The bent nature of the transitional space of the entrance has been replaced by a direct spatial penetration towards the central multi-purpose space of the *Diwankhana*. This spatial system emphasises the concept of dominance and centrality of the main entrance in relation to other spaces, which in turn reflects the idea of exclusivity and excellence in the personality of the individual at the expense of others. It reflects, moreover, the nature of excellence and bragging in the mentality of Iraqis, within this social group, during this period. *Shanashil*, in traditional examples, are replaced by open balconies, which functionally are used as architectural solutions for environmental purposes through providing a kind of shade and protection from the severe impact of the summer sun and winter rain. Otherwise, they lost their significant social settings in monitoring and observing the sphere of the main alley from the inside out manifested in traditional contexts. Functionally speaking, these elements are useless with regard to the family as long as they make family members under the influence of a direct visual intervention by passers-by and, consequently, break their privacy. However, these components are often used by the head of the family and the male in summer nights for social interactions and discussions or enjoy the picturesque view of the river from this place (Figure 7.26).



Figure 7.26: External and internal image, showing the *tarma* in the *Diwankhana* section, of *Bayt Marjan*.

The house was built in a new residential district outside the spontaneous fabric of the *mahalla* with open spaces surrounding the house and isolating it from its neighbours. This characteristic represents a remarkable factor of modernity and social exclusion. In general, the house reflects,

in its spatial organisation, the socio-cultural aspects of the traditional house with a focus on the conservative nature of the Iraqi mentality.

7.2.3.4. Bayt (House) Sadiq Ja'fer Al-Nargilchi, Karrada - Baghdad (1950 AD)

Historical Descriptive:

This outstanding house was built in 1950 by an English general, and sold through a mediator to Haj Sadiq Ja'fer Al-Nargilchi. Home ownership was then transferred to his son Abdul-Jabbar Al-Nargilchi who currently occupies the house with his mistress and the family of his son. Al-Nargilchi family is one of the old families of Baghdad, which lived in *Sababigh Al-A'l's mahalla* in the Masloub (Crucified) mosque's district in Risafa. The family belongs to the Arabic '*Bani Asad*' clan, whose origins return to the west of the Arabian Peninsula. The house represents a certain stage in the history of architecture (the fifties architecture) with a clear impact of modern architecture and the western style in the spatial and functional organisation of the house. The house is located in the Karrada *mahalla* and, specifically, on one of its old roads known as the 'Seven Palaces' Street'. The road derived its name from the seven villas which were designed, according to the Victorian style, and built since the inception of the street in the fifties of the last century (Figure 7.27).



Figure 7.27: The ground floor plan of *Bayt* Al-Nargilchi, Karada – Baghdad, 1950 AD

Architectural Description:

The street front of the house is about 12 metres long and faces the north-west direction. It consists of two main parts (masses). The right one is a huge semi-cylindrical mass with two rectangular form wooden windows mediating its semi-circular part. The left mass consists of a large colonnaded terrace, with a high floor of about 60 cm. from the street, and two circular concrete columns supporting the wide balcony that covers the entire terrace. The terrace and the balcony are associated with internal spaces through a rectangular form wooden double door and a four modular wide window on each level. The upper parapet of this mass is crowned by a pitched roof covered with red tiles.

House's ground level can be divided into two spatial zones. The front section includes a large multi-purpose family space, a spacious reception hall (*Barrani*) and a large bedroom to house guests or visitors significantly in the case of public activities. The family hall is about 7*5 sq. m. and opens directly to the outside public sphere through the main entrance door with the absence of the transitional space of the entrance. The reception hall (*Barrani*) is about 6.5*4 sq. m. and in direct contact with the dining room through a wide sliding door. The reception hall and the dining room occupy the semi-cylindrical part of the house which includes, in addition to the small window on its curved side, two large rectangular form windows on the north-west side. This zone represents the public section (*Diwankhana*) in the socio-spatial divisions of social practices. The back zone includes a small bedroom, a kitchen and several service spaces. This quarter opens to a small colonnade porch at the rear of the house through a small door used as an additional entrance for females in case of guests and visitors. The upper level includes five large bedrooms along a central corridor, a kitchen and many service spaces. This level is associated with the two balconies above the main front porch and the small one in the back of the house. Balconies are guarded by decorated wrought-iron balustrades. This section represents a harem zone and accommodates family's private and semi-private activities (Figure 7.28).



Figure 7.28: External Images of the main façade of *Bayt Al-Nargilchi*, Karada - Baghdad.

The house was built of brick and lime with I-shaped iron beams and arched brick structural fillings in between for the construction of the roofs. External walls are finished with the brick in Flemish-bonded *chef-qeem* method. Interior walls and roofs are covered with white plastering. Ceilings of the different spaces are crowned by circular form plastered strips, emphasising their centres which are used for the hanging of fans or crystal chandeliers. The house in its architectural form, spatial organisation and structural details, reflects the modern trend and Victorian style in architecture and is due for a specific period in the history of architecture.

Socio-Spatial Analysis of Internal social activities:

Public and semi-public activities take largely place on the ground floor of the house. The multi-purpose family hall reflects the social and functional role of the courtyard in the traditional house. This space is used by family members in exercising their daily practices while the reception hall has been allocated for men in case of public events and activities. The architecture of this zone and its spatial organisation demonstrate changes in the social and cultural aspects and the conservation nature of society during this period. It reveals how these changes affect its inherited principles such as privacy and gender segregation. In many circumstances and social occasions, the lady of the house can veil herself and greet guests as a kind of urbanisation and social openness, especially when there is a kind of strong social relations with visitors, such as blood or marriage relationships. Otherwise, a small bedroom, on the other part of the ground level, is dedicated to females' meetings and social interactions.

Private and semi-private activities take place, as is the case with other examples, in the harem section and the upper level of the house. Due to the severe climate of this region, especially in summer periods, and society's socio-cultural determinants, the use of balconies is confined to provide shade and environmental protection for spaces served by. Otherwise, they only achieve an aesthetic value added to the elevation of the house as is the case with most of the homes in the first part of this point in time.

7.2.3.5. Development Project of Haifa Street, Part "6" / Professional Studies Office – TEST, Ma'ath Al- Alusi

Historical Background:

This project is selected to discuss the role of social and cultural aspects and residents' daily practices in creating a favourable living environment (if they exist). It refers to how these factors work within the atmosphere of a residential building. The project was designed to accommodate particular social groups and according to a political decision, as mentioned earlier. It identifies the impact of these aspects, if any, in the spatial organisation of public and private activities. Stakeholders' viewpoint was to create an integrated neighbourhood through the implementation of a variety of functional activities included within a wide area. The project was built after the

demolition of a staggering number of traditional houses with the exception of only 9 homes, have been preserved and maintained to be used for specific functional purposes. These homes chronicle a certain stage in the history of architecture (the thirties architecture) and are important figures in the history of Iraq.

According to the approved planning policy, special importance had been given to the housing sector, in terms of high-rise or high-density forms, to create an integrated language among the traditional form and specified functions. The project has been divided into (9) different groups where the housing sector occupies groups between 1-4 and 6-8. Other groups have been designed for commercial, administrative and cultural purposes. Designs were chosen by the municipality of the Iraqi capital in 1980 according to an architectural competition through which many architects and local and global consulting offices were invited to participate. The architect, Ma'ath Al Alousi, won the design of part (6) (housing complex), Al Mousawi to design commercial buildings while many other consultants were determined for the design of other groups on both sides of Haifa Street. The municipality of the Iraqi capital, through its administrative and regulatory teams, took the responsibility for identifying planning, design, construction and environmental standards according to high global specifications. They developed specific design factors with respect to, for example, directing buildings, the glass area in relation to the built-up area, the movement of pedestrians and the creation of unity between buildings and the surrounding tissue to achieve a sort of continuity in the architectural language.

The plot area allocated for the development of Haifa Street is about 349 hectares. Building rise was determined to be between five and nine floors, with the exception of Part (8), in which each building consists of 15 levels. With the completion of the project (in 1985), the street includes (228.753 sq. m.) for residential purposes, divided into (2096) flats (75% of which are three bedrooms and 25% two-bedrooms), and are housed around (14.244 inhabitants).

Architectural Description:

Part (6) is characterised by the architect's awareness to the vocabulary of the architectural language of this region through its interaction with the reality of region's unique environmental and historical factors. These criteria formed largely essential elements of the architectural concept through the creation of a regulatory and formative way of housing units. According to the viewpoint of the architect, these elements grant a continuous communication between the '*glorious*' past, present and future through their embodiment of specific social characteristics reflecting the distinctive style of life in this part of the world. This part occupies an area of approximately (10.5 hectares) and includes (517) residential apartments (377 three-bedroom units and 140 two-bedroom units) accommodating (3.339 inhabitants). Housing units display a range of typical apartments to accommodate a particular social group in society represented by *middle-income families* (Figure 7.29). Each floor consists of four residential units linked horizontally through a small transitional public space, and vertically through two vertical zones revealing a (multi-storey/multi-family) residential complex as a neighbourhood. Each unit consists

of a small transitional space, as an entrance opens directly to the main family space, three or two bedrooms and several service spaces distributed on either side of a central corridor.

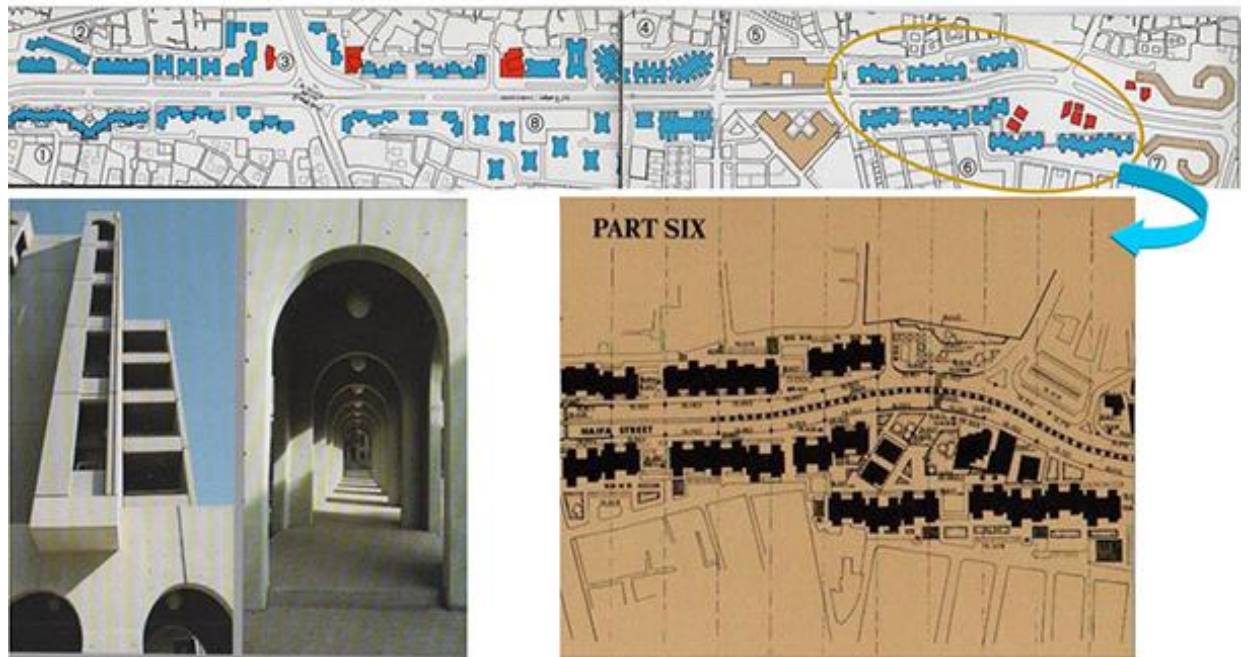


Figure 7.29: The master plan of Haifa Street Development Project with Part (6) and images of the residential buildings (Al-Mashhadani, 2009, p. 96)

Public spaces were planned and designed between residential buildings, as local markets and attractive visual points within the whole composition of the complex, and linked together through the *Riwaq* (corridor), as an architectural metaphor of the traditional architecture. This architectural component provides a protection for pedestrians in the residential complex and the units on both sides of Haifa Street. The component illustrates a significant architectural expression to reduce the impact of the inhuman scale of buildings. Units of the *Riwaq* are assembled together within a dynamic linear path. Prefabricated concrete panels have been used in the construction of these units for the purpose of completing the project as early as possible according to high engineering specifications simulating the global technological development. This decision was approved without taking into account the severe environmental burdens and the impact of such construction during the summer in particular, in addition to the bad orientation of many housing units towards the north-east and south-west. Eventually, this project has created some sort of formal separation with the surrounding tissue in contrast to architect's expectations or project's main objectives (Figure 7.30).



Figure 7.30: External images of Haifa Street Development and the architectural component of the *Riwaq*

Socio-Spatial Analysis of Internal Activities:

There are no specific determinants in the spatial organisation of different activities within the same residential unit as long as they can take place in the same space. The absence of an identified spatial domain of the entrance exposes family members, inside the multi-purpose family space, to be susceptible to the direct visual intrusion of people using the central public space of the building in case of opening the main door. For safety and security considerations, children are ordinarily using the public space of each level for the exercise of their activities. Otherwise, they are not allowed to use public spaces outside the building and are forced to be inside the unit.

The specified social class, these units were designed for, creates another social segregation or exclusion with users of the surrounding context. This led to the abandonment of open public places which often seem empty and deserted except for some users of the local markets. Socio-cultural activities and public religious rituals take largely place outside the complex where specific people and relatives are exclusively invited. Families, during this period, hesitate to call or invite each other due to many economic determinants and the availability of space. In subsequent periods, different families of different social classes and cultural factors, norms and traditions, precisely those of low social class from outside the city, began to move and inhabit these units, especially after the forced displacement of many families in insecure areas in Iraq. Accordingly, the family found itself in the midst of strange and unacceptable socio-cultural factors that affect their daily lives, their primary beliefs and convictions, and their style in the breeding and protection of family members.

Bedrooms, with their massive borders, represent the harem section within the spatial organisation of the residential unit. Private and, sometimes, semi-private practices can be conducted in a specified and limited freedom. Family living space accommodates social, cultural, functional and religious practices during the day. It works as a multi-purpose spatial domain for the performance of different daily practices such as praying, eating, sleeping and marriage and birthday celebrations. It is furnished with many couches and sofas surrounding its central space which is mainly covered by a rug, or mat in the summer, to sustain its cleanliness in comparison with its surroundings. Footwear should be left outside its borders, or in the portal space, to keep this area and make it ready to perform everyday practices (Figure 7.31).

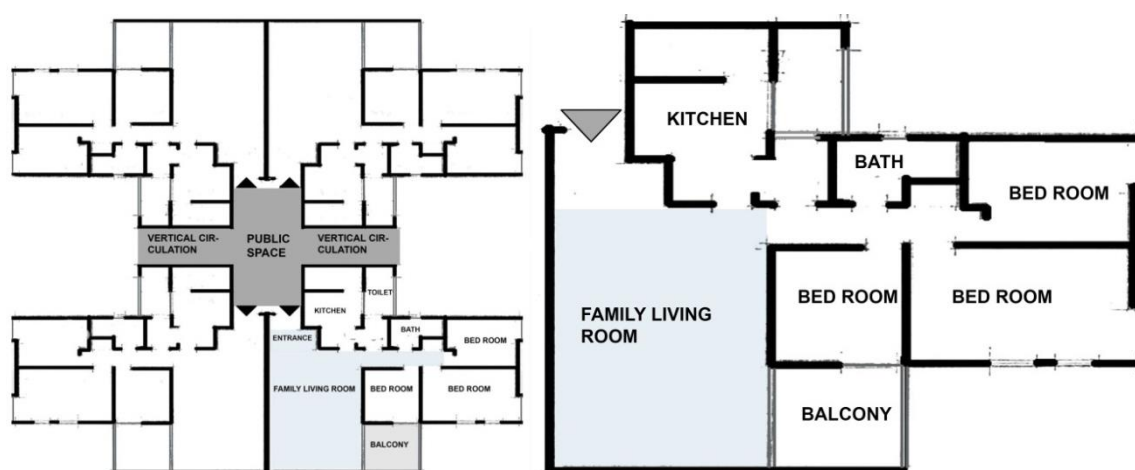


Figure 7.31: The ground floor plan of the apartment and a cluster of apartments within the same level in a residential building of part (6) in Haifa Street Development Project

In general, there are no specific determinants of social activities with respect to the spatial arrangement which, in turn, may affect the social and cultural values and the conservative nature of the family. At the same time, it is noticeable that the man became generally spend more time at home than in traditional contexts, except for the elderly or pensioners who attend popular coffeehouses in the surrounding area.

7.2.3.8. Redevelopment project of *Suq* Hamada (Hamada market), (1982), Baghdad–The Karkh Idrissi Centre for Engineering Consultancy-Baghdad Municipality-Engineering Department

Historical Background:

The idea that has been evolved for the preparation of planning and architectural designs for the development of the urban and residential project, in a reference to the *Suq* Hamada (Hamada market), came in response to the basic standards of data in urban areas. Last specifications had been proposed in the master plan for the 'Karkh' district in Baghdad. Planning policies and housing strategies had recommended the implementation of the project in accordance with the

policy of redevelopment depending on the maintenance and preservation of the traditional style within the conservative context of this region. However, the desolated structural situation of (90%) of the quantum of the area, which needs to be removed or replaced, made the housing strategy tended to respond to the policy of redevelopment and use of specific planning and architectural features rather than maintaining the existing tissue. Implementation of this concept ensures the continuity of traditional architectural character embodying the heritage of the region according to recent contemporary engineering approach (Figure 7.32).



Figure 7.32: A view from the River of Tigris for *Suq Hamada* Residential District in Baghdad

The territory of the project, with the surrounding context of 'Bab Al Mu'adham's bridge' and 'Hammad Shihab's square', constitutes the north-west corner of the Karkh district. This region is unique due to its historical significance of being located within the walls of old Baghdad. The region has a clear triangular form borders; the bridge of Bab Al Mu'adham, Haifa Street, and the bank of Tigris River. The latter zone is distinct, particularly in this part, due to the presence of the remains of the walls of the historical brick staircase dated back to about 1000 years of age, before the round city of '*Dar es Salaam*' (currently Baghdad). The project was built on an area of around (44.660 sq. m.).

Architectural Description:

Planning categories, used in the design of the project, emphasise the traditional concept of *mahalla*, as the basic neighbourhood unit, in addition to the maintenance of the existing fabric of the street. They also stress the use of pedestrian walkways in the access to housing units. The site includes, in general, 105 houses, a coffeehouse, local markets, two mosques ('Al-Thuraya mosque' and 'Hamada market mosque'), corridors, green public spaces, garages and public services (Figure 7.33). The main idea of stakeholders and decision-makers was the pluralism in home designs in order to create and achieve a sort of diversity in the spatial and formal composition as well as the planning organisation for the entire project. Accordingly, six various

designs, in terms of the construction area and the arrangement of spaces, had been approved. These examples are based largely on and shared similar planning and architectural standards developed by decision-makers.

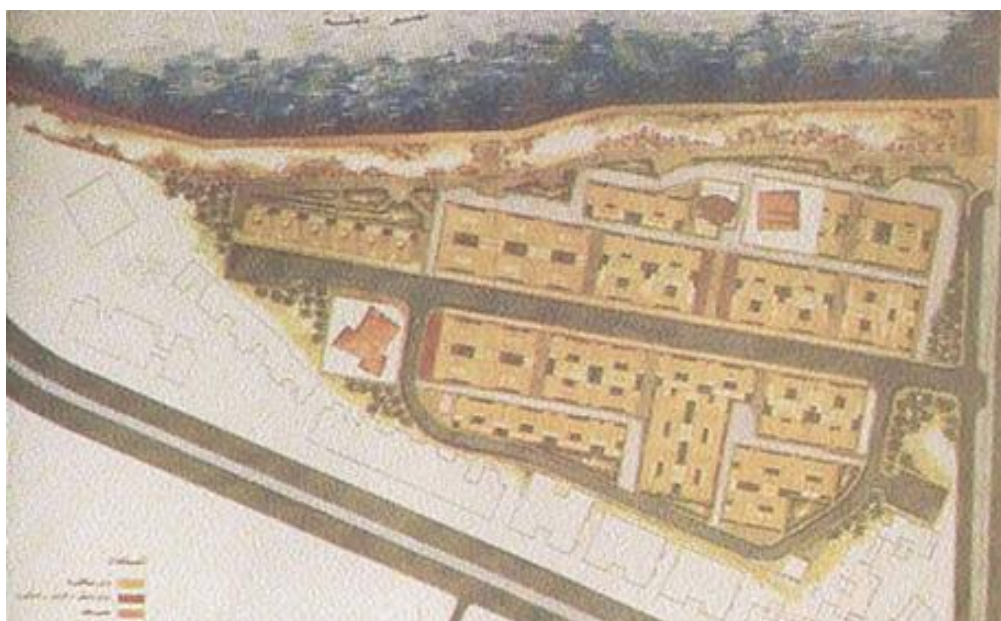


Figure 7.33: The master plan of *Suq Hamada* Residential District in Baghdad (Source: Amanat Baghdad)

Each house consists of two floors with an internal covered courtyard surrounded by many spaces, reflecting the concept of the traditional *howsh*. In the case of model (6), which the researcher was accidentally called just to take a look at its internal organisation, consists of a small transitional entrance with a small toilet for guests on its left side (Figure 7.34). This space leads to another transitional space connected with a spacious reception hall (*Barrani*) and a multi-purpose central hall. A large living room is located on the other side of the courtyard (the multi-purpose family space). This room connects with the courtyard through a sliding glass door reflecting the concept of *iwan* in traditional cases. A small bedroom, a kitchen and many service spaces are arranged on both sides of the courtyard. The upper floor features two large bedrooms, where one of them has a small service space as a bath. These rooms open together to a small common area overlooking the central courtyard through a glass partition. The common space, located above the main family room on the ground floor, reflects the semi-private sphere of the family. A corridor, two small bedrooms and many service spaces, in-between, are located on the other side of the courtyard.

The upper level of the house includes a structural protrusion, including five arches filled with a wooden screen, reflecting the architectural composition of the *shanashil* in traditional houses. The high parapet gives residents the ability to use the roof for social interactions and sleeping during summer periods. The architecture of the house in its spatial organisation, architectural features and structural elements largely reflect the introverted nature of the traditional model, where privacy and gender segregation are key factors in its arrangement. This is demonstrated in the use of two transitional spaces keeping family members far from the public sphere of the main street in addition to the use of small windows, to the outside, on a rise that prevents any visual

intervention. Accordingly, home architecture came similar, in a high degree, to the concept of the traditional courtyard house. Although houses, according to designer's concept and approved planning factors, were designed to maintain the concept of the traditional alley, but what actually implemented varies significantly from what was adopted. The mosque, as a dominant architectural element in the Muslim world, is located on the bank of the Tigris River achieving an attractive visual point in the whole residential context, and linking social, commercial and recreational activities with each other. Riwaq (corridor) in addition to many visual and symbolic barriers are used to isolate this area from the surrounding tissue and the main street, and to prevent the penetration of the car into the residential fabric.



Figure 7.34: Ground and first-floor plan of example (6) in *Suq Hamada Residential District* in Baghdad
(Source: Amanat Baghdad)

Socio-Spatial Analysis of Internal Activities:

Spatial organisation of housing units and the *mahalla* reflects, in a high degree, the organisation of public, semi-public/private and private practices that have been discussed and analysed in relation to the previous point in time. Public and semi-public activities take largely place on the ground floor where the central multi-purpose space is used as the main gathering arena during the day. Upper floor reveals the harem section where private and semi-private social interactions can happen.

Despite designer's attempts in the creation or re-utilization of traditional socio-cultural aspects in the architecture of the home and the *mahalla*, the project failed to reflect the active nature on the traditional daily life. Social, cultural and political factors play a significant role in the lack of success of this work due to the high specificity of families or individuals, this project was designed and built for, represented by senior military officers in the Iraqi army. Accordingly, the entire

territory of the project is fully blocked and guarded to prevent any intervention from any person from outside the complex. Moreover, residents' social and cultural relations with each other and external society are limited and confined to specific social actions with formal practices and procedures. Up to this moment, the region is heavily guarded to prevent any stranger from entering the area or using its mosques, for example, with the exception of residents and persons accompanying them.

7.2.4. Observations on Modernity and Socio-Spatial Relations

The traditional urban fabric of the *mahalla* during this period went through a series of transitional developments under the weight of modern ideological propositions which affected its inherent social life and socio-spatial relations. Modernity, in its social and cultural propositions, has built, according to Giddens (1991b, p. 2), other *forms of social interconnections* which are *global in their consequences and implications* between community's different classes. It has altered, on the other hand, people's *intimate and personal* convictions and day-to-day practices and existence. Following Jean Baudrillard (2001, pp. 178-180), modern issues have focused heavily on external relations of the objects emphasis on the logic of '*simulation*' rather than the '*real*' posed intimate relationships between people and everyday interactions. The second half of the 20th century has witnessed a dramatic and comprehensive impact of modern principles of Iraqi society which led to reduce or cut off assistance from the inherent knowledge of prior environments. On the other hand, modernity came with lots of evolutionary facts and beliefs in the formation of new environments through the main reliance on formal simulation of old architectural elements, ignoring the role of traditional social and cultural factors. They accepted history as fragmented values that cannot reflect certain organisational and transformational principles (Giddens, 1991a, pp. 5-7). Modern developments, practised in different parts of Iraq or imposed on traditional contexts since the beginning and increasingly, after the fifties of the 20th century, appeared, according to the arguments of proponents of this trend, as the spread or the harmonious continuation with these contexts. In fact, modern principles completely based on different factors from those shaped the traditional one. The problem is that there are no competent expertise, as has been mentioned in several parts of this study, can evaluate these projects in their appropriateness to the nature of Iraqi society.

The *scope and the sheer pace of change* as well as the *intrinsic nature of modern institutions*, according to Giddens, have their great impact in identifying the *discontinuities* between modern and traditional social orders (Giddens, 1991b, pp. 2-3). These discontinuities affected respectively the regulatory system and the functional settings that formed the traditional environment. They revealed a sort of socio-spatial separation between each of the environments, which in turn led to another crash in the social relations of the individual with the surrounding tissue. Individual's social ethics and behaviour are therefore unstable due to changeable contextual standards within the same environment. Accordingly, people have to constantly refer to the specific principles of the surroundings they found themselves in with reference to the social and cultural aspects.

These developments as well as imposed functional activities are accompanied by a change in the day-to-day social life of the people, and have profound reflections on their personal actions and behaviour. The daily life in the traditional *mahalla* has been affected by the ordering and reordering of social relations and interactions in connection with modern on-going social and physical inputs. Imposing modernity in traditional contexts is, according to Abdelmonem (2010), clearly *problematic* due to their significant social, cultural and *spatial differences*. At the same time, forcing a social group with inherent socio-cultural values to relate to or continue with alien social principles and physical settings is also problematic. This can be largely observed in *Suq Hamada* residential district or the development of Haifa Street.

Marx and Durkheim argue that the beneficent possibilities of modernity exceed its negative aspects as they, depending on their point of view, can establish a harmonious society and an integrated social life with the surrounding environment through the creation of a secure existence than prior systems. Social and physical security for the new environment depends to a large extent on alien social factors and cultural standards from these organised the traditional *mahalla*. Access to such possibilities, according to Max Weber, will happen at the expense of authenticity, creativity and autonomy as important factors in identifying and maintaining social relationships with respect to traditional ethics (Giddens, 1991a, p. 7). As a result, a fragmented social order has dominated traditional contexts, revealing a prominent aspect of the new developments.

Synthesis: Rebuilding the Socio-Spatial Spectrum

Previous discussion and analysis of case studies show the apparent influence of new socio-cultural concepts, imposed by modernity, on the nature of Iraqi society and its underlying aspects. They affect increasingly the spontaneous relations between all segments of society and among family members as well, especially under the dictatorial regime of Saddam Hussein. They influence, moreover, the privacy of the family and the social and everyday life of its actors. Many housing types had been addressed revealing the modern trend in architecture and the spatial organisation of social spaces within the confines of the house and the neighbourhood unit. Gridiron pattern of new-designed neighbourhoods and the reliance on the scale of the new transport method rather than the individual in drafting their spatial and physical settings affected intimate socio-cultural aspects of community members and their daily practices. At the same time, they demolished the solid social structure describing the traditional context and the role it occupied in organising people's social, spatial and physical needs and requirements. They impacted heavily on the cohesive tissue of residents' social relations and mutual responsibilities and replaced them by abstract and rationally formalised principles ignoring, thus, the [Man] as a reference unit in the construction of the urban tissue. These procedures destroyed, on the other hand, the concept of space and the mutual and reciprocal sequence of public and semi-public/private spaces of the *mahalla* and affected, respectively, the private domain of the individual social unit. They demolished the concept of the *mahalla* as a big house for its residents and, therefore, the defensible nature of space. Accordingly, the outer wall of the house became

the only socio-spatial barrier or physical isolation between outdoor and indoor spaces rather than inherent socio-spatial conventions, norms and principles controlling spatial realms in traditional contexts. Each family found itself in total isolation from the community. Heterogeneity of the social structure of the new neighbourhood forced the family to avoid any contact with neighbours or any participation in community's general affairs and responsibilities. This concept affected family's socio-cultural values, relations and daily practices. This situation could be largely observed in residential buildings of Haifa Street or other development complexes that have been mentioned earlier.

On the scale of the house, new socio-cultural values affect the family and social relations between its members. The spatial arrangement and physical properties of modern examples encourage social separation, isolation and individuality and led, thus, to emphasising the hotel-like concept of the house in which each cell embraces the values and beliefs of its occupier far from the social and cultural atmosphere of the family. The presence of many outlets in the design of the house or the same space allows family members to enter and leave the house without being observed by the others despite the existence of the main family hall as a replacement of the courtyard in the traditional example. Physical settings determine the separating lines between different spaces and the specific activity taking place in each room in contrast to the dynamic socio-spatial interplay between social spaces and the multi-functionality of space describing the traditional pattern. Moreover, the extroverted nature of the modern house exposes the family to the outside sphere and affects, therefore, its privacy, safety, security and stability. Achievement of these values depends on blurred physical elements rather than solid socio-spatial determinants and authentic socio-cultural values. In this context, a high imbalance between societal and personal factors can be assigned. At the same time, any spatial or physical amendments can be implemented or carried out on the basis of individual regulatory standards without taken into account their influence on the privacy and home life of the neighbour or the family itself in contrast to strict social values and solid cultural principles defining former norms. These actions are a reflection of social separation, exclusion, inequality and incompatibility between users of the same district which led to emphasising a feeling of not belonging or non-affiliation to the surrounding social context. The latter notion can be clearly experienced between users of residential buildings of Haifa Street or users of *Sug* Hamada district. Within these contexts, each family creates its special world away from the intervention or the influence of the surrounding based on the principle of social fear or caution from the other, as being addressed by many interviewees and residents.

As a result of contradictory social values and cultural beliefs, tradition and identity became depending on formal elements and physical features in describing their concepts and meanings rather than timeless socio-cultural values and reciprocal daily practices. Perceptual identity and irrelevant tradition became the prevailing notions and prominent forms in modern settlements instead of inherent socio-cultural patterns describing the traditional form. Collective identity as the sum of individuals' aspirations, integrated relations, awareness of past knowledge and inherited heritage and actively organised everyday practices has been lost and replaced by a sharing of similar formal or architectural image in describing its concept, meaning and objectives. Therefore,

architects and scholars refer to traditional formal images in achieving identity and tradition rather than inherited socio-cultural factors, ethics and beliefs. The achievement of these notions depends on the copy-paste process or the manipulation of the architectural form in recalling their meanings. On the other hands, the architecture of home reflects contradictory and inconspicuous values revealing the duality nature of the Iraqi mentality rather than noble aspects, people greatly called to in their daily lives. This notion produced a rationally confused architecture between what an individual holds of authentic principles and inherent values and what has been implemented effectively in line with the standards and requirements of modernity. The same, even worse, can be observed in the following period. The following figure compares the socio-cultural and socio-spatial aspects of this period and the former.

Findings of the socio-cultural and socio-spatial aspects of the first period; 1869-1918	High degree of privacy, gender segregation and social solidarity with high degree of social equity and stability	Weak degree of privacy, gender segregation and social solidarity with observable social inequality and instability	Findings of the socio-cultural and socio-spatial aspects of the first period; 1918-2003
	Weak home life compared with strong social life with all segments of society	Strong home life compared with weak social life	
	Spontaneous, fluent and dynamic socio-spatial flexibility and simplicity between domestic and outer realms	Weak, identified and limited socio-spatial flexibility between domestic and outer realms	
	Easy and strong socio-cultural relations, daily practices and interactions	Weak and more formal socio-cultural relations with specific families	
	Strong and reciprocal social intimacy, hospitality and a sense of neighbourliness	Formal and restricted neighbourly relations, with blurred social intimacy and hospitality	
	Strong and reciprocal social intimacy, hospitality and a sense of neighbourliness	Strong and reciprocal social intimacy, hospitality and a sense of neighbourliness	
	Flexible activity-space-time relation within the confines of the house and the <i>mahalla</i>	Strict and determined activity-space-time relation within the confines of the house	
	Highly dynamic and informal socio-spatial relations between the individual and the surrounding space	Formally restricted socio-spatial relations between users and the surrounding space	
	Informal, clear fluent borders between public, semi-public/private and private domains	Lack or unclear and blurred borders between public, semi-public/private and private domains	
	Self-sufficiency and community-based management	Non-self-sufficiency and formal state-based management	

Figure 7.35: Showing the socio-cultural and socio-spatial aspects of the first and the second historical phases.

7.3. Part III: Socio-Spatial Analysis of the Home; (2003-2015)

7.3.1. The Nature of Contemporary Iraqi Society

This period has been identified to be discussed separately, although its short term, due to the significant change in social factors, cultural values and the future vision of the members of Iraqi community, in addition to people's distorted perception of the essence of ethical and religious principles that characterised this period. The heavy impact of the last three or four decades, including the three wars suffered by the community and the economic embargo imposed on Iraq since the beginning of the nineties are the main factors behind these changes. These reasons have led to a significant change in the nature of Iraqi society to the extent that money has become the main catalyst of social relations between society's different categories. As an illustration, I heard from many people and friends very serious lyrics, in the form of an order, demonstrating clearly the existing nature of social relations among Iraqis, which can be summarised as follows:

“... Do not trust anyone no matter what the degree of your relationship with him is, or whatever cordiality, friendship and respect, he may show you, because he will soon stab you in the back without taking into account any social, cultural, religious or ethical considerations” [I16.6.14]

What is striking is that people are talking dramatically about social aspects, cultural values, sublime religious principles and behavioural determinants, but, in reality, they practised them in a different way and unacceptable manner, stressing Ali Alwardi's viewpoint regarding the duality nature of the Iraqi personality, which was first mentioned in 1951 in his book “*The Personality of the Individual Iraqi: Search in the psyche of the people of Iraq in the light of modern sociology.*” Through my accurate observation of peoples' daily practices, I found that features; such as robbery, bribery, the acquisition or rape of the rights of others, the lack of social and cultural affiliation as well as the religious partisanship for a specific category at the expense of another are part of the attributes that characterised most of the categories of Iraqi society. People's glimpse of things, even moderate layers in society, seems erroneous and illogical compared to the true meaning of social, cultural and religious principles. This was exactly what I heard from one of my friends, who tried to advise me on my first visit to Iraq after the fall of the dictatorial regime of Saddam Hussein and after twenty-five years in exile, when he said:

“You have left Iraq for a long time. You do not have an idea of what happened during this period, and how people's social morals and principles have been changed. My point is that you can do whatever you want, but do not “**belong to**” this society at all, because you'll find yourself banished by all segments of society even the cultivated” [I17.6.14].

These words reveal explicitly the general attitude of every person, in the new Iraq, to work for his own benefits with no respect for others or for society as a whole. Freedom to perform religious practices, which was confirmed under Article 41 of the Iraqi Constitution, has been strengthened to the extent that it has become the main factor of peoples' social life and daily practices. *The life*

of Iraqi people has become hostage to these religious rituals, elegies, gatherings and processions rather than latent social aspects, cultural values, norms, traditions and religious principles and teachings which have achieved, over centuries, their ability to organise society in an integrated and mutual manner (Al-Qassab, 2014, p. 9). The performance of these practices, especially during the month of Muharram, leads to a total freeze of other community affairs, and any person attempting to criticise or disagree with the method of implementation is considered as outside religion and presented to the despised by society.

An important point needing to be mentioned here is that the new Iraqi Constitution, imposed by various parties with ulterior agendas and considerations, has proved for years that it pours into the destruction of Iraq and has a significant impact on Iraqi society. Development and adoption of this constitution have been determined without considering the real nature of Iraqi society and its various components which led consequently to the marginalisation of its inherited socio-cultural principles. Perhaps the worst, which came out by the occupation, is the deliberate fragmentation of Iraqi society to secondary components and the destruction of the Iraqi identity, according to the opinion of many sociologists and historians. The second belonging has become the perfect solution and the basis of affiliation for most Iraqis. This point of view imposes on the individual to identify himself as Shiite, Sunni, Arab or Kurd or others (Al-Qassab, 2014, p. 4). What led to the aggravation of the problem is the succession of a series of weak governments in the state administration. These governments have different political and religious affiliations in addition to their main objective to satisfy their personal desires at the expense of Iraq's interests and society. This has led to the consolidation of administrative and financial corruption by exploiting the position for personal benefits, such as bribery, extortion and commissions. In Iraq, the administrative and financial corruption is an old phenomenon that hits the administrative system, even if in a limited way, since the emergence of the Iraqi government in the twenties of the last century. This situation has been exacerbated in particular since the beginning of senseless wars of the former regime in 1980 and the imposition of the economic embargo on Iraq by the United Nations. These circumstances have stepped up the pace of internal conflict over resources, combined with the spread of the culture of theft and bribery as a social epidemic. The latter phenomenon has continued to spread after the US occupation of Iraq in 2003 and the process of political change. Financial and administrative corruption has become a scourge of necrosis in the body of the country and people, and thus caused the spread of poverty. It obstructs any efforts aimed at development. What is important is the effect of this phenomenon on the fairness of income and wealth distribution, which has become in favour of the strongest in the community - who monopolise power - or those close to them. This, in turn, has led to the promotion of class differences in income and wealth, including its negative impact on the whole social fabric. Moreover, corruption leads to depriving Iraqis of wealth or even of the most basic necessities of living (Ismail and Abbas, 2015, pp. 91-92).

Above-mentioned factors reinforced sectarianism and socio-cultural segregation between community's different classes and led to the entry of Iraq into a new phase of civil conflicts. They led to the conglomerate of community members in groups and parties on the basis of religious,

clan or tribal standards in order to protect themselves. However, such discussion require in-depth analysis which is beyond the scope of the research but pointing out some of its aspects shows the extent of their impact on community members, their socio-cultural values and daily practices.

7.3.2. New Administrative Structure of the Community and the *Mahalla*

The institutional structure of the Iraqi city depends on the concept of Muhafadha (City governorate), which, of its primary functions, achieves most of the city and community affairs. This system is much like that applied in the prior period with the exception of the amendment, conducted after 2003, in the development of a provincial council. Establishment of local institutions, theoretically, embodies the democratic practice as a method of management's techniques to ensure Iraqis' experiences, on the one hand, and to achieve their ambitions, on the other hand. This depends, according to this system, on the principle of decentralisation in the experience of local governments in Baghdad and other Iraqi cities. Main tasks of the council are the continuation of the institutional operating activities in the management of city's various parts within the limits of the municipality of the capital or the Muhafadha, and assess their performance. They are, as stated in the text of the formation of these councils, eager to expand the basic functions and the participation of citizens in taking responsibility. They enable people to manage their own affairs by offering them the possibility of controlling the performance of government agencies in general. Individuals, moreover, evaluate and review the performance of the governor in the ratification of the services and development projects in relation to each city. Council members must be selected from the population of the city itself in order to enhance the role of the individual in the development process. According to this structure, Kadhimiya sector is included in the responsibilities of the Municipal Council of Al-Karkh district, which consists of four boards. Kadhimiya Municipal Council includes, moreover, nine neighbourhood's assemblies covering the main boundaries (www.iraq-ig-law.org). This classification led to a series of lengthy, tedious and futile administrative procedures which in turn impacted negatively on the reality of the city, its infrastructure and living standards of the individual.

Within the phenomenon of corruption which has plagued Iraq, the council through its members, committees and presidency, has become an obstacle and a stumbling block to any real intention, if any, for the development of society. It became, therefore, representing himself, not the citizen. These negative practices have been enhanced because of the large change in the social structure of the categories of Iraqi society and the strength of the Bedouin factors that boosted through the control of its elements and members on the major joints of the administrative state and its institutions. This group owes largely in its loyalty and sincerity to the tribe and its interests rather than the state or society. Thus, the new administrative structure does not achieve any developmental steps with regard to society and its urban and built environment. On the contrary, it has contributed to the destruction of the social and cultural values of society and the infrastructure of the built environment. Often, what is determined or approved by the governor; if any, faces rejection from members of the council. In this regard, people in different parts of Iraq are, at the

present time, calling for the abolition of these councils, such as that can be inferred from the following document, which has been ratified by a large segment of Iraqi society:

“Because of the injustice witnessed in the province, through poor services and financial and administrative corruption by the provincial councils, we believe that the existence of these councils is redundant circuits for the need within the administrative organisation of the city. These councils do not do any good, in addition to the incompetence of their members, and their work for their personal interest at the expense of the individual and his fundamental rights. Therefore, we call for its abolition in all parts of the country”
[11.10.14, 122.12.14, 115.11.14, 148.10.13]

As a result, individual's participation in decision-making processes, if any, is very limited and marginalised. Man, within this system, does not have any authority to control his own destiny or to decide his future or the future of his city. On the contrary, he has unfortunately contributed to the collapse and destruction of the intellectual and historical heritage of this area, as it will come to be discussed at a later time.

Based on the above information, the traditional social structure of the *mahalla* is limited to the formal existence of the Mukhtar, whose main responsibility is limited to the registration or validation of people who belong to the region under his responsibility. Otherwise, he has no authority to participate or veto any decision of the council with respect to his *mahalla*.

7.3.3. Contemporary Environment of the *Mahalla*, and Building Conventions

The general perspective of traditional environments in Iraq reflects informal neighbourhoods and degraded urban tissue with respect to social, cultural and physical characteristics. It reveals the existence of a distinct lack of basic services and appropriate levels of living. Most residents of traditional *mahallas*, these days, are of low-income or low social class. People nowadays look at the population of these contexts in a kind of contempt or scorn using a variety of terms to describe their situation referring to their deteriorating morals and behaviours. At the same time, Iraqi families, in general, are reluctant to build a close relationship with the families of these areas because they reflect, depending on their point of view, lower social positions or socially infected environments. On the other hand, the traditional *mahalla* reflects a weak degree of safety, security and social solidarity among its members compared with its prior situation.

Hierarchical organisation of spaces and alleys has continued, albeit to a lesser extent, representing a social system that governs social life of the population, but according to a set of loose and lax rules. These areas still reflect individuals' social gathering spaces, especially for women and children who spend longer times in the alleys. Non-specific nature of the space in nowadays *mahalla* has a significant impact on the privacy of the family. The change in the social and cultural aspects of society and the interconnected nature of private/public domain of spaces encourage people, with no specific social or cultural restrictions, on the use of alley's different realms, or spend longer periods there without being asked about the reasons for their presence. I

have noticed during my frequent tours across the alleys of the *mahalla* that some young people, sometimes those who are not from the *mahalla* itself, are gathered at specific nodes or in front of certain houses without taking into account the social determinants of residents and their privacy, or without being controlled, directed or punished by the men of the *mahalla*. At the same time, the replacement of high-located small openings by wide windows has become a clear architectural feature of the house in traditional contexts. In this regard, movable curtains and iron louvres are used to achieve privacy rather than the strict nature of the surrounding wall in traditional units.

There are no certain building specifications for historical complexes in Iraq in general and Kadhimiya in particular. They are still in accordance with the same building standards and regulations of modern contexts which grant property owners of traditional houses the ability to create high-rise buildings above small plots within the traditional fabric of the *mahalla*. Currently, many parts of this complex include disjointed and inconsistent architectural elements with the surrounding tissue. Corruption in the administrative system and the lack of credibility in the application of development projects have allowed the owners manipulating building specifications. These actions are reflected negatively on the technical qualities of the implemented projects. The result, has been drawn according to numerous interviews with decision-makers and stakeholders, is that these people do not have the slightest scientific or logical idea about the importance of the traditional urban fabric of Kadhimiya or other old districts. The answer obtained, during an interview with a member of the Municipal Council regarding the importance of the traditional urban fabric around the shrine of Imam Kadhim (PBUH), is that: "... *these are all ruins and must be demolished*". Moreover, the new development project of the traditional core of Kadhimiya will lead to the demolition of an area of about 500 metres, in radius, for the purpose of providing an open yard, which can accommodate a large number of people during religious events. It is imperative here to point out the official view of the decision-maker, during an interview regarding the new development project of the city of Kadhimiya:

"According to this project, the city of Kadhimiya will turn into one of the most important religious and tourists' attracting cities in the world and be able to accommodate about five million visitors every 12 hours a day" [I33.9.14, I36.7.14]

These words indicate clearly the illogical, irrational and non-scientific method in dealing with such sensitive areas. They suggest, moreover, that the new committee does not have a specific future strategy to maintain or develop traditional contexts on the basis of latent socio-cultural values carried by.

Iraqi cities during this period have witnessed a major building movement, especially when a large number of agricultural lands or, in some cases, those planned for future governmental uses within the master plan of the city, have been converted into residential districts according to poor planning settings which have nothing to do with the traditional or the modern style alike. This conversion is based on personal reactions. Those who bought, built on and used these plots relied on the policy of "*the reality of the current situation*". Subdivision of these areas to residential units and the system used for the movement had been accomplished mostly by unqualified

people or, in many cases, by the owners themselves. Moreover, what is being implemented on the ground is quite different from those submitted to the competent authority for the purpose of obtaining official approvals on the division. The problem is that each matter or issue in any part or joint of state's different institutions can be resolved, no matter its essence, by the power of money without taking into account its future negative impacts on the city and the community.

7.3.4. Social Sphere of the *Mahalla* today

7.3.4.1. Socio-Spatial Spectrum and Daily Actions in the Public Domain

The *mahalla*, in general, still shows to some degree inherited social norms, conventions and traditions on which specific spatial settings have relied. Monitoring and analysing people's daily activities and practices assist greatly in clarifying the changes in contemporary spatial settings. They give an idea of the way in which public spaces have been arranged to deal with or absorb these procedures.

The new administrative order, the change in the nature of Iraqi society, its socio-cultural aspects and the current status of the population affect largely the social sphere and, thus, the socio-spatial settings of public spaces. Since the early hours of the day, the public realm of the *mahalla* is largely witnessing people's and workers' movement from outside *mahalla*'s limits to their workshops, places and stores. During the day, elders of the *mahalla* gather at specific corners, usually in locations adjacent to the coffeehouse, local stores, or in some cases, in front of their homes to chat and interact with each other. In parallel with these practices, vendors and suppliers of the basic needs of families and local requirements for women at home use the public domain of alleys as paths for their vehicles. These practices, as well as turning *mahalla*'s alleys into just paths for pedestrian, and the proliferation of local shops, lead to the reduction of social practices and activities between *mahalla*'s members, females in particular, and affect the family's privacy during the day. This movement offsets by adverse actions at a late hour of the day, and the return of *mahalla*'s members to engage in social life and the use of public spaces for social interactions. As a result, functional and business practices dominate the public sphere during the day while social practices distinguish its realms at night. Rearranging private spaces according to the nature of outdoor activities, business or social relations throughout the day reflects the social spectrum of the contemporary *mahalla*.

As long as the vast majority of the current population of these contexts are from low social class, with their ease socio-cultural values and mutual and spontaneous relations, an extensive use of public places with effective threaded relations describes the social sphere of the *mahalla* at present, unlike the traditional one described in previous phases. Informal procedures and the conduct of blur socio-spatial boundaries between representatives of this group promote their familiarity with public spaces. On the other hand, the diversity of public actions and community actors along the day is considered, by inhabitants, as a key factor in the persistence of social

spheres. The investigation of the main reasons behind choosing to live in such contexts shows that 66.7% of the population suggests that social values and everyday life are the main factors in spite of the lack of the basic needs and services as well as the limited areas (Figure 7.36). In an interview with one of the users of traditional contexts showed that this person had already left the *mahalla* for more than seven years, but still comes everyday spending hours with his counterparts around the local shops or at the coffeehouse. He stated, in response to researcher's query about 'what does the *mahalla* mean for you?'

"I cannot expect myself beyond or outside the limits of 'my *mahalla*'. I have memories, stories and history in every part and corner of the *mahalla*. I know every detail about it, every person and every house. I considered it as my large house. I am dead outside it. It grants me a life which I did not find outside its boundaries" [I6.10.14].

This quote indicates clearly the strong social bonds, solidarity and relations connecting residents of traditional contexts with each other to the extent that each one of them became part of the social tissue. It shows the liveability of traditional contexts and reflects the intimacy, familiarity and compatibility factors between their users. These issues are important factors to achieve a sustainable living environment through the other preference-reliance and the outlook on the people of *mahalla* as on family.



Figure 7.36: Showing the socio-spatial sphere of the contemporary *mahalla*

7.3.4.2. Social Spectrum of the Private Domain

This part addresses the contemporary private sphere of the family life. The study relies on the relationship between the two realms of space according to perceived socio-spatial factors. Generally speaking, the *mahalla* today is composed of smaller and less influential units. Many distinguished homes were demolished or rebuilt according to modern features. Three main types can be identified within the structure of the contemporary *mahalla*. The first is represented by those with an introverted spatial structure, with or without courtyard, which is occupied by the sons of extended families. The second includes those with the extroverted spatial organisation, referring to new-build units according to personal reactions and modern considerations. And finally is the style that includes multi-residential buildings that are used to a large extent by new

independent social structures of extended families, by new tenants from out of town or for commercial purposes as stores for adjacent workshops or hotels, especially in the holy cities such as Kadhimiya. The marginalisation that affected the concept of the extended family and the tendency to independent housing units have been compelled families in some spatial and physical modifications for containing new social structures. The result of this change is the reorganisation and division of traditional houses into small units according to illogical architectural solutions, especially with respect to service activities such as bathrooms and kitchens (Figure .37). Large houses with two courtyards, as is the case with Abbas Al-Ma'arouf's house and Jasim Sagar's house, were divided into two parts relating to their main social sections (*harem* and *diwankhana*). Social zones were physically and spatially separated from each other for the purpose of the use of each part as an independent housing unit. The separation affects the social factors and the privacy of family members, and demolishes the hierarchical order of social spaces within the same unit. In the case of small plots, the *mahalla* has witnessed the emergence of the third pattern with multiple apartments' buildings. According to the questionnaire, which included inhabitants of *Al-Tell mahalla* in Kadhimiya as well as residents and users of traditional contexts in the city of Hilla, most apartments are occupied by nuclear families or individuals, who are mostly workers from outside the city filling small houses or rooms in new buildings.



Figure 7.37: New pattern of apartment buildings within the organic fabric of the traditional *mahalla*

The questionnaire results show that the dominant family size in these contexts is ranging in a convergent ratio between households of 5-6 members (36.7%) and 7-8 individuals (30%). The size of small families (3-4 members) and large ones (9-10 members) have a ratio of 13.3% and 20% respectively. However, the majority of households, which consist of 5-6 and 7-8 members, indicates that these homes still accommodate a large number of individuals compared with their

income and available space. In general, these rates are still within the national standard for the size of the Iraqi family. The low-income status of the majority of families of small houses doesn't allow them to maintain their homes. The local municipality, on the other hand, does not pay attention to these units despite repeated promises in the allocation of funds to rebuild or maintain these houses. These factors have led tremendously in the continued deterioration of the physical properties of these units. Many families are still living in deteriorating housing units with the lack of the simplest level of basic needs. With regard to the main problem faced by the residents of these contexts; 56.7% of inhabitants, 73.3% of users and 60% of professionals and decision-makers pointed out that the deterioration of services is the main problem faced by these families in their current places of residence, while about 26.7% referred to small spaces.

Socio-spatial organisation of home today is blurred and fragmented compared to traditional environments (Figure 7.38). This is due, on the one hand, to the high prevalence of workshops, as mentioned above, throughout the alleys of the *mahalla* by converting ground floor rooms, adjacent to the alley, for commercial purposes and business, particularly units near the local *suq* (market), without obtaining any official approvals. An entire change in the functional properties of many of the homes to commercial or industrial premises, workshops or places for the



Figure 7.38: The change of social sphere in the contemporary *mahalla* through the spread of commercial activities in its public spaces and functional changes of domestic spaces at ground levels.

manufacture of local products, such as baklava (Iraqi sweets), has been observed. Officially, building regulations in the Baghdad Municipality (Law No. 8, 1.1) and other Iraqi municipalities do not allow the establishment of commercial buildings within the urban fabric of traditional contexts. The population is dependent mainly in such circumstances on the policy of "*the reality of the current situation*" brought to bear significantly after 2003 due to the absence of strong administrative structures capable of applying these standards strictly. This situation has led to the duplication of functional properties within the same traditional context. Thus, public places are no longer residential territories, as is the case in the former period, but witnessing a daily struggle between social factors and commercial settings. This duality has a significant impact on the privacy of the Iraqi family and its everyday life. Women, in this respect, are not able to move and exercise their social rights freely as they used to do in previous phases, but only with the presence of the man who usually stands in front of the entrance door to cover the exit or entry of his women and prevent young men, buyers or passers-by to take a look at his family. Many conflicts arise between members of the same *mahalla* for this reason.

The increase of the Iraqi family income, regardless the legality of this income, has encouraged the individual to build or re-build his own home according to fluidised, non-restricted or, often, personal regulations. This compresses heavily on the built environment and the spatial organisation of activities with respect to new-build structures. Eventually, the demolition of many traditional houses for the sake of rebuilding new smaller types according to modern categories or changing its residential function have led to a clear loss of social connectivity between private and public spheres and the absence of semi-public/private realms characterised traditional contexts. Sequential change of the space from the most public to the extremely private and the mutual meaning of transitional spaces had deteriorated by the implementation of the concept of the multi-functional *mahalla*.

Despite these changes, there are many attempts of utilising inherited socio-cultural aspects in the design of the contemporary home. The following example tried to invest these factors for the creation of a sustainable environment socially and culturally as well as environmentally.

7.3.5. Bayt (House) Rasool Al-Abadi Alnasrawi in Karbala, (2011)

Historical Background:

This house was built in 2011 by Haj Rasool Al-Abadi, and designed and supervised by the researcher. The owner of the house is a merchant. He belongs to Abada clan which is one of the age-old families that owe their origin to the Arabian Peninsula. Haj Rasool Al-Abadi has a significant social status in Karbala society.

The house is located on the north-west side of a dead-end alley (agd) divided from the Sayida Ruqaya Street in the Baladiya district in the holy city of Karbala. It has one main façade opened to the alley while the other three sides are adjacent and in a similar height to neighbours. The house

was built on a rectangular plot of about (13.90 *17.40 sq. m.). It occupies a built area of about 400 sq. m. spread over two main levels. For social, cultural and environmental reasons and in order to preserve the privacy of neighbours, house's different spaces are arranged on three sides around an external open space as a recession in the long void front of the rectangular mass of the house. This organisation creates an irregular façade surrounding and overlooking the open space. It is, therefore, used as a primary transitional realm before entering the domestic sphere at home (Figure 7.39).



Figure 7.39: ground plan and internal image showing the main entrance in Al-Abadi house in Karbala, (2011)

Architectural Description 'Features':

Down to the owner's desire to create a distinctive house which can achieve and sustain an ultimate degree of privacy for the family without compromising the privacy of neighbours, the house was designed with two main entrances to its various social and spatial divisions within the same level. The first passes through a small transitional space to a large reception hall (*Barrani*) and an internal multi-purpose public space. The latter opens to a small family space in contact with an open kitchen. Entrance space contains a small toilet for the use of guests and visitors. This zone represents the public and semi-public section of the home. The second entrance is mainly used by females and passes through a small transitional space to the private section (*harem zone*). This section includes two large bedrooms and many service spaces. These rooms are used for the accommodation of the family head and his lady as well as unmarried family members.

The upper floor consists of two parts sharing an inner family space, with the possibility of future complete separation (Figure 7.40). Each part includes two bedrooms and a kitchen opened to the family space in addition to many service spaces. The level was designed according to the wishes of the owner to accommodate his sons' families after marriage, promoting the concept of the traditional extended family and ensuring the future of his children. Currently, each bedroom is

used by one of his children. The public space at ground level is in a triangular form where a monumental spiral staircase occupies the hypotenuse of the triangle embodying a distinct element in the façade of the house. Each side of the house, adjacent to neighbours, includes a small skylight provides sunlight and ventilation to internal spaces. The central one, which is opened to the living space, has a sculptural composition, designed by an artist, to give a kind of glamour and visual diversity to family members. Exterior windows and doors are protected by wrought-iron sash covering in floral motif decorations.



Figure 7.40: The first-floor plan and internal image showing internal multipurpose family hall in Al-Abadi house in Karbala, (2011)

Socio-Spatial Analysis of Internal Activities:

The architect tried in this house to re-utilize traditional norms and principles in this composition achieving family's socio-cultural aspects and reflecting the conservative nature of the community of Karbala. To enhance privacy and maintain gender segregation among family members and between them and visitors are the main factors adopted in this design. The house achieves an ultimate degree of social separation from the public sphere of the main alley through the creation of an external transitional public space before accessing to internal spaces in addition to the existence of two isolated entrances.

Public and semi-public activities take largely place in the reception hall and the multi-purpose internal family hall with a large concentration on the social segregation between men and women. The internal family hall accommodates family's social actions and daily practices such as eating, sleeping, praying and, sometimes, food preparation. Social rituals, such as marriage celebrations, can also be performed between the *harem* section (internal family space) and the public part (the reception hall or *Barrani*) (Figure 7.41). These parts are spatially separated from the sacred

region of the family, which includes the main bedrooms on the second section of the ground level, through a small transitional space. In this design, the internal public space replaces the courtyard in the traditional pattern socially and functionally. It represents an open field where various social practices during the day can happen. It mediates and isolates male / female sections to achieve a high degree of privacy. Living space reflects the position of *talar* where social affairs, social gatherings, praying, sleeping, eating and preparing food, due to its openness to the kitchen, can be exercised. The internal spatial organisation provides appropriate diversity and social change, various social practices, in collaboration with the continuity of traditional beliefs and authentic ethics. This organisation reveals and maintains the introverted nature of the traditional form.

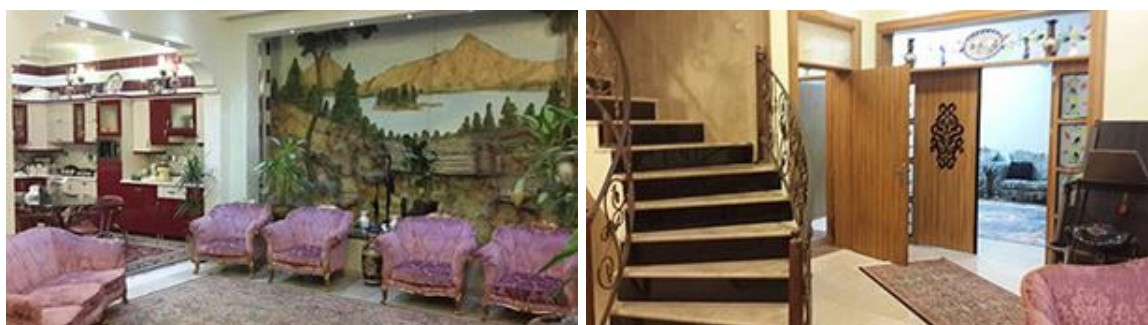


Figure 7.41: Images showing internal organisation of spaces in Rasool Al-Abadi house in Karbala, (2011)

Synthesis: Rebuilding the Socio-Spatial Spectrum

This period reveals many confusing, immoral and illegitimate factors, values and principles describing most of the segments of society, as have been discussed above, as a result of various political, economic, security and personal considerations suffered by the community. New governments have failed to achieve any improvements in all community facilities because of the system of corruption and sense of not-belonging, which included all the state institutions and all segments of society. As a result, no real developments or conscious efforts can be addressed or assigned in the architecture of the home or the built environment during this period. All the attempts, if any, lack credibility, transparency, scientific or real understanding of inherent social and cultural values of the society in their approach, which led to the continuous deterioration of the entire urban fabric. Overall, they pour in the self-interest without the slightest regard for the interest of society. The architecture of the house is just a blind manipulation of the physical components and unreasonable use of building materials to show the economic level of the individual away from the inherent socio-spatial organisation of spaces or without taking into account the values of neighbourliness, privacy, social equality, solidarity, intimacy and familiarity that characterised Iraqi society. On the other hand, no specific identity can be identified or revealed in addition to the on-going destruction of the traditional heritage for personal interests.

The following chapter will draw attentions to research findings and recommendations. It will uncover thematic issues identified in the second chapter with respect to the traditional built environment for the purpose of briefing and responding to research main inquiries and questions.

CHAPTER VIII

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Introduction

The main concern of this study is to find out how socio-cultural factors and people's day-to-day practices in Iraqi traditional contexts constitutes interactive, cohesive, reciprocal and mutual living environment. It detects how these principles can be re-utilized or re-employed in our approach to the establishment of more sustainable built environment. In this context, the study has tried to detect a number of issues in relation to its main concerns to capture the process, on which the architecture of the house and *mahalla* was formed. It mainly relied on the analysis of the architecture of the traditional house and the urban fabric of the *mahalla*, and how this organic tissue responded to specific socio-spatial settings. The study has tried to understand and highlight the impact of these factors, compared with contemporary settlements, through sequential analysis of the historical evolution of these principles. More accurately, in the framework of indigenously built environments, home and *mahalla* were examined by following specific socio-spatial approach to express and illustrate the organisation of social activities in public, semi-public/private and private realms in reference to the extent of their relations with inherent habits, customs, conventions and traditions.

The main aim of the study, addressed at the inception of the research; ***“Conducting an analytical study utilises the socio-cultural aspects of the traditional home environment in order to provide a broad platform in our approaches to achieve more sustainable developments,”*** has been developed to address and clarify the following questions, which form the basis for research queries and detailed analysis.

1. How do social aspects, cultural beliefs and users' daily lives have identified and organised social spaces, and revealed the entire image of the traditional home and built environment?
2. How do social traditions and practices in the home environment can be enhanced by the continuation of former factors rather than the formal imitation or simulation of its physical properties.
3. How do the social and cultural strands of sustainability can be achieved through the re-employment of social aspects and cultural values derived from traditional home environments.
4. How do the concepts of tradition and identity; as the outcome of interrelated relations between different factors, variables and practices, can be addressed and reflected by maintaining the latent socio-cultural aspects of society.
5. What sort of concepts, norms and beliefs may emerge and operate in the application of these factors?

Given the objective and inquiries mentioned above, this study is conducted for the purpose of contributing more ideas and conceptions of both empirical and theoretical knowledge of the traditional home environment, specifically with regard to the concept of privacy, female interactions and social relations with the public sphere of the traditional *mahalla*. More importantly, it reveals that space organisation, its domestic settings and reality of the traditional *mahalla* have

been affected by the day-to-day practice of its actors. Based on the conclusions and information gathered from previous chapters, research contributions lie largely in two main fields. On the one hand, it opens up our knowledge to important issues in the formation of the traditional urban environment in this part of Iraq rather than environmental and economic determinants. The adopted approach, associated with and distinguished socio-cultural nature of Iraqi society, is considered as a key technique or solid base for further similar studies in other parts of Iraq. It provides a clear understanding of the influence of socio-cultural aspects, habits, traditions, norms and rituals in the way in which integrated socio-spatial settings were operated for the continuation and development of the traditional environment in Kadhimiya, and similar cultural contexts. It creates a thorough knowledge in respect of Iraqi society and its latent characteristics and standards, and how understanding and precise application of inherent knowledge and concrete norms and conventions led to a particular house form and urban fabric.

According to the outline of the contributions mentioned above, following analysis deals largely with main topics discussed in the second chapter, and how these issues have been made in relation to research main objectives and question relating to Iraqi traditional contexts.

8.1. The Architecture of Home between Socio-Cultural Practices and Socio-Spatial Settings

The architecture of the traditional house depends largely on the interpretation of underlying and mutual socio-cultural factors and day-to-day practices of its users to adjust dynamic and flexible settings that describing space. Within the first phase of studied periods, these factors are more meaningful, understandable and determinable in the individual space which is, according to Abdelmonem (2010, p. 262), increasingly restructured and reorganised to accommodate specific social practices and functional activities. Social life and its spatial interpretations revolve around the concept of the man, his personal beliefs and mutual relations with others within the borders of the individual dwelling unit or the *mahalla*. According to Gregory Bateson (1951, cited in Rapport and Overing, 2002, p. 332), [Man]'s life is the product of those suggestions and assumptions whose validity is a function of his belief in their efficiency. Inherent habits, rituals and behaviours built on the basis of interwoven norms, traditions and collective ethics determined the space, its physical properties and domestic features. Home architecture is consequently influenced by users' social actions and daily interactions instead of physical settings as universally acknowledged today. *Talar*, *Ursi*, *Tarma*, sacred domain and so on were not only spatial results of specific activities and functions but the constant interpretation and reflection of a range of social practices and cultural beliefs embedded in society. Accordingly, home is organised in accordance with day-to-day practices and spatial changes as important determinants of in-house analysis. Space form and its physical settings are understood on the basis of the social organisation and structure of its users and, thus, the number and arrangement of its domestic features. Therefore, understanding social practices, procedural decisions and current needs of the people are more

influential than the physical properties of individual space. Within this context, design and use of each space are subjects of change during the day, with regard to the social and cultural value of the function or practice performed.

Social location of the activity and its procedural nature determines to a large extent contextual settings for its performance. Space validity is, therefore, a function of socio-cultural beliefs and morals of users rather than concrete physical properties of its components, as is the case in the modern home. Social interactions and unconscious abstract of the individual in these reactions draw the comprehensive concept of space. Acting in specific daily action within the confines of a specific space ceases, according to Rapport and Overing (2002, p. 332), the reality of socio-cultural factors to exist, as long as the individual refers to its components, and to what extent will continue to work on the assumption of its presence. Correlation between time and space plays an influential role in the description of the changing nature of social practices during the day in both realms, in reference to public and private spheres. Each realm presents a variety of social domains according to the social practice and individual's socio-cultural beliefs and standards. This relationship confirms dialectical process between social factors and space organisation. It underscores change - continuity and performance - flexibility relationships in home architecture.

Historical understanding of socio-cultural changes over a period of time determines the shift in physical and spatial settings in home architecture, and how can these changes be interpreted or embodied in the design and use of space. In comparing study periods, we found that the multi-purpose nature of the living spaces, for example, has been identified sequentially to specific activity reflecting particular social or cultural conditions, unlike traditional patterns. Changing social and cultural beliefs and principles of the individual as a result of the change in the nature and structure of the Iraqi society, as a whole, as well as the impact of modernity has played a large role in this transformation. Contemporary house is organised around blurred social principles and ethics, where the physical settings of space determine the performance of social activities within specific spatial configurations and, afterwards, '*the social meaning of domestic space*' (Lawrence, 1987, p. 31). Exactly the contrary, form and structure of the traditional house are defined with reference to solid traditions, standards and beliefs, as used contextually by people with regard to their mutual, collective and underlying socio-cultural values as well as daily interactions and practices.

To create an ideal home environment, we need to focus on the spatial organisation of social activities more than the formal arrangement of its architectural components. The previous topic is primarily determined by users' socio-cultural aspects and daily practices, pointing to the ethics of the social sphere. It is principally socio-culturally in inception and is given a significant form through the mutual interplay between its various domains. Creation of the traditional house and its physical structure are influenced by the social and cultural milieu of the family, and are best suited for the way of life of its members emphasising the concept of, as Rapoport called in (1969, p. 49), "*social unit of space*". This concept has deteriorated in the contemporary form, as each family member exercises his daily affairs in a kind of separation from the others because of more formal

institutional control systems in today's society. However, social and cultural factors are still, to some extent, telling a lot about social life and expected characteristics of individual's interactions with the surrounding environment. Next contemporary issue highlights the impact of latent aspects in space organisation, and how traditional socio-spatial principles have been utilised and employed at home architecture.

8.2. Approaching the Reality of Mahalla

"The mahalla was my big home. It was my first home. I spent more time in the mahalla than in the home. Mahalla members were my family and their women and daughters were my sisters. Any word against any of them was against me and my family. I didn't lift my eyes up to look towards any woman of passers-by even, in some cases, was stopped by them for asking me about anything concerning my parents, sisters or brothers. I responded and my eyes were staring towards the ground. In these circumstances and this atmosphere, we all lived in the old mahalla" [16.10.14].

Analysis of people's daily lives and social practices puts into perspective the extent of the contextual boundaries of space in which social actions and ethics have conducted and changed over time. In this context, social practices, behaviour and relations are controlled through the highly organised social structure, which is the outcome of constant actions of negotiation between individuals (Rapport and Overing, 2002, p. 332) on the assumption of people's power and self-management on *mahalla's* social spheres. Members of this structure have constructed a set of rules, conventions and norms, dominating community affairs, on the basis of underlying and mutual social, cultural, economic and political criteria, suggesting a deep knowledge of Iraqi society. Through the authority granted to social structure, principles that govern the space and rules of how to use this authority have been identified and worked. These rules have revealed an integrated Constitution that should be followed and not be exceeded in any way by community members in their daily practices. It was expressed and enhanced through the fully met of its principles by community members with respect to each realm of *mahalla's* spatial divisions. Continuing this structure refers to the on-going maintenance of its process and actions by individuals through their commitment to its principles in their social relations. Success in achieving these rules, or control system, is manifested by social and psychological punishment by the elders and residents towards the offender. Social boycott and public reprimand to the individual offender or, in some cases, families are examples of applied penalties against any person, or group of individuals, who defies the rules of daily life (Abdelmonem, 2015, p. 271). Accordingly, spatial interpretation of users' daily practices, social relations and behaviours submits the whole concept of *mahalla* and attracts the spatial limits and relations of each actor with the surrounding environment. Respecting and following these rules practically support the concept of territoriality, promoted by Oscar Newman in 1972 and discussed afterwards by many scholars, and thus

create and achieve the concept of defensible space, as described previously. They reveal individual's relations with specific spatial and physical settings and control over the organisation and use of space. In Iraqi traditional contexts, especially in Kadhimiya, this notion is largely related to social practices and daily activities under the control of social norms, cultural traditions and religious values more than planning factors and design principles.

Sequential transformation of space and its settings for each division is linked to the previous concept, where the [M]an, his individual actions, collective practices and free limits of social sphere define and configure the settings of each section. Each individual is surrounded by a socio-spatial sphere, whose limits and influence varies with respect to each practice and inhabited activity. Individual's behaviour and the granted area or free limits of his practice in public contexts are larger than those in the semi-public sphere of the dead-end alley. People's practices in public spheres are quite different from their behaviours, ethics and reactions in alleys. Each division has its own and common regulations or tools on which each member or group, regardless of their particular interpretations, needs to recognise and follow. At the same time, each part has its designated representatives or actors throughout the day. This pattern is organised according to specific socio-spatial relationships to ensure, in a sense, the active presence of past experiences, evidenced by people's responses and thoughts relating to the surrounding environment.

Create or modify any particular space or boundaries affects respectively the spatial structure of the surrounding context and users' practices in addition to the nature of its actors. Open a store or coffee shop, enlarging house's openings, demolition of alley's dead-end and first floor's expansion on the emptiness of the alley are many examples of these amendments [12.10.14]. Such changes must in inception follow specific codes and be under the socio-political control and management of community elders and heads, as long as they may engender instant social responses from neighbours or residents (Abdelmonem, 2015, p. 272). This procedure governs the social interaction, physical encroachments and spatial amendments ensuring the integrated nature of society and the concept of self-sufficiency in the traditional *mahalla*. The first concept emphasises community manageable regularities, which are in continuous change according to reproduction and consumption process of everyday life. The second notion stresses people's intimate social relations and mutual practices.

Change the properties of social practices during the day with regard to local and outsiders; who use the *mahalla* on their daily trip for the completion of their immediate needs, approaching their workplaces, shopping and so on, offer a range of spatial rules characterising the transitional nature of each social sphere from others (Figure 8.1). These regularities affect the presence of women, their social interactions and daily activities in these worlds when exposed to visual intrusion by passers-by or those in coffeehouses. These practices take largely place in the public domain of main thoroughfares or public spaces. Nature of these actions is quite different from those in semi-public or private spheres, where privacy and security and, thus, home borders define their strict socio-spatial regularities. Understanding the meanings and values of these principles provides a system of collective realities, norms, needs and demands upon which

people depend on the measurement of success or failure in exercising their daily lives. Crossing or exceeding the threshold of these realms from any stranger puts him in an interrogative and investigative position. At the same time, his actions, unconsciously, change dramatically, as is the case in "Sure, you lost your way?" question [I25.7.14, I26.7.14, I27.7.14], which was issued during a conversation between a group of women in one of my journeys through the organic tissue of *Al-Tell mahalla* in Kadhimiya. This part represents the semi-private domain of *mahalla* or the semi-public realm with respect to home as an extension of internal realms especially during the day and in the absence of the man. The practice of home, according to Abdelmonem (2010, p. 274) in his intensive study of the architecture of old Cairene home, "*is practising intimacy and authority, familiarity and coherence under strict control*". Moreover, social relations, practices and activities show a kind of collective codes, all members need to follow and abide by. They form the socio-spatial settings of the specific context on which people rely in their general relations.

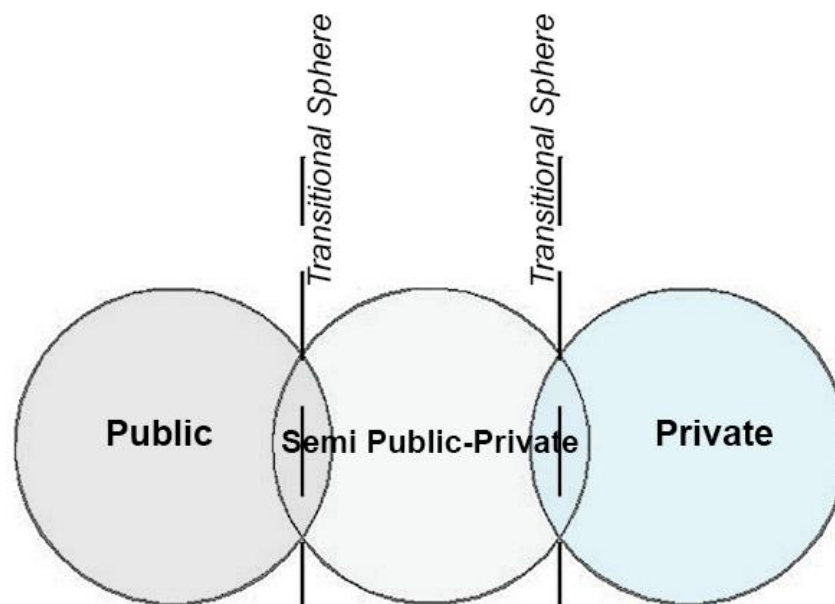


Figure 8.1: Showing the organisation of social spaces and overlapped transitional spheres in the architecture of home and *mahalla* in traditional contexts

8.2.1. Learning from the Old Traditional Home and *Mahalla*

To possess some basic understanding of past experiences and everyday life of the traditional community is to visualise the importance of socio-cultural values and relations, as a kind of knowledge. Understanding socio-cultural aspects and how they really shaped traditional contexts help people to acquire a historical awareness of past experiences in order to maintain their present lives and inform contemporary decisions. To obtain knowledge from the past is to situate and inform the present, and clarify the purpose of our existence. It introduces rigid codes for explaining our humanity and identity. Our knowledge of how the traditional environment has been shaped and the way, those who preceded us, practised their social, cultural, religious and

functional rituals and activities introduce a significant base on which we can depend in perceiving, defining and shaping our own presence.

Scholars differ in their view on how to employ past experiences, collective aspects and daily practices of our ancestors, and the extent to which these factors can form and define our current environment. Through theoretical and empirical knowledge obtained in the previous chapters, home environment incorporates significant issues and settings that can be re-employed in our attempts to create and form our current lives. Habits, rituals, ethics, norms and traditions identify the major components of the collective memory, or the concept of social memory, which first argued by Emile Durkheim and deemed competent means for the interpretation of social processes. Recognise the importance of a particular topic or specific experience is more influential than the formal or exact interpretation of the specific meaning and content of this issue in today's environment. This idea defines the main meaning of the concept of collective memory. It offers some sense of the past, which is required to express and draw our present and identity. Each social practice and behaviour are compared to and controlled by our knowledge of past experiences, as a set of codes or guidelines. In most interviews, people described their reactions in comparison with inherited practices. They call often on the social relations of their ancestors, as appropriate references to show their resentment and discontent of contemporary experiences and changes in respect of all social affairs and practices.

In following topics, the research will shed light on some of these settings. Organising space for domestic and local activities, the position of women and privacy, change-continuity and performance-flexibility nature of social practices, neighbourliness and the concept of social solidarity are many of the components that show the great role of socio-cultural factors in maintaining the traditional environment.

8.2.2. Domestic Functions and the Organisation of Space

Design and use of the home; in terms of the latent socio-cultural values, mutual relations and reciprocal practices among the population, regulates implicitly and explicitly domestic activities spatially and temporally (Lawrence, 1987, p. 114). Iraqi traditional house and family life are organised on the basis of a collection of inherent habits, ethics and social class. They depend on inhabitants' social relations and practices referring to a set of norms and codes pertaining to Iraqi society. Daily activities and associated norms, rituals and conventions are commonly impressive in drafting the whole concept of home. Analysis of socio-spatial variables for each activity, on the basis of inherited values and past experiences, helps us to understand the design and use of the home. Sleeping, eating, socialisation and associated rituals indicate the main practices of family members and thus affect the structure of the house.

Sleep occupies considerable attention because of its association with or commitment to the sacred domain of the family. It reveals the intimate relationship between its actors reflected in the safest and most sacred zone in home architecture. This activity is largely practised in the *harem*

section. Its organisation and associated spaces, represented in the use of many transitional spaces and corridors before approaching its sacred realm, are organised in a way revealing the sanctity and secure nature of this activity, especially for families of prominent social class. This pattern of spatial organisation does not mean total isolation from the outside world. Women can interact with each other and monitor the public domain of the courtyard or the alley by the presence of *ursi*, *shanashil* and *Kabishkan* spaces [I58.9.13, I54.11.13]. They are accustomed to invite guests, particularly those of similar social status, and meet them in the sacred place to brag about or show its size, pattern of organising space, decorative elements and interior features. Regarding low-order households, this activity and associated spaces are organised in a simpler form than the former. This space is in direct contact with or access to the *ursi*, if it exists, or the open *tarma*. This group uses simple furniture and domestic features compared with high-class families. Time plays an important role in the spatial or contextual performance of these activities throughout the day or year. Former description reveals dramatically activity's socio-spatial traditions and practices over the winter. Throughout the summer, environmental conditions and long hot hours of the day have a clear impact in shaping the socio-spatial settings for this activity. Two regular trips can be observed in exercising sleeping as well as eating rituals. The first trip takes place during the day, when women are accustomed to washing the *Sirdab* (basement) in order to cool air currents penetrating its scope from the *Badgeer* (wind catcher) towards the courtyard, and arrange its internal and domestic elements for lunch and spend the siesta. Another regular transformative trip takes place in the evening between the house and the roof. Likewise, women wash, arrange and prepare the roof for dinner and social interactions before bedtime.

Spatial organisation of this section is apparently changed in subsequent periods and turned into a single room in the architecture of the modern home. Within this context, bedrooms are largely located on the back side of the house away from the inconvenience and bustling nature of the main street. However, there is no evidence of architectural limitation or social restriction of placing them on the front side. This architectural solution has impacted the privacy of the family especially with the presence of large windows due to the open nature of the modern house. Physical boundaries and structural elements have become the main determinants and key milestones in deciding the secured and sacred domain rather than interlaced socio-spatial settings in the former pattern. Room sizes, the presence of a set of sofa, coffee table, TV and fridge as well as an en-suite bathroom reveal marital status in comparison with the low-class social group. Organisational form limits social interaction among family members and reduces greatly the social concept of the house [I43.10.13, I60.11.13]. As a result, separated units or apartments are created or produced inside the same house pointing out and stressing the concept of "*the hotel's house*", where each family member lives in an isolated cell from the others. This concept ignores the fact that the '*man is a bundle of relations, a knot of roots, whose flower and fruitage is the world...*' (Ralph Waldo Emerson, brainyquote.com). Placing the staircase away from the social space of the family (living room) or the control and monitoring of family members as well as using multiple stairs in the house design help greatly to the promotion of social isolation and weakening of social cohesion among family members [I52.1.13, I14.11.13].

Eating and its social settings are considered as significant regular rituals and temporal events stressing family's social bonds, cohesion and solidarity in the traditional home. To accomplish this activity, women spend a long period of the day in preparing and cooking food using the public sphere of the courtyard and *talar*, as an extension of the kitchen space. In this place, mother or eldest daughter takes the responsibility for distributing, identifying and adjusting the duty of each member with respect to the completion of this ritual. Breakfast and dinner are taken regularly at home. Although the family head is keen to take his lunch, which represents the main meal, at home especially in summer times, working conditions force him sometimes to take it at his workplace. This meal is usually followed by a period of sleep (siesta period) before returning to work again. Otherwise, the meal is delivered by one of his sons to the workplace or is taken with his peers in the local restaurant. Males take first their meal at *talar* or the courtyard, followed by females who take it in the other *talar*, if exists, or any place of the courtyard adjacent to the kitchen. In some cases, females use the *tarma* or *ursi* room, in the first level, for exercising this activity while males are taking a period of rest in the *talar* or the courtyard, drinking their tea or discuss family different affairs, concerns and responsibilities. Males and females sit around the dining table according to their seniority or status, while the children are always filling the gaps between the adults of both sexes. This method teaches children how to respect adults, and makes them feel their protection, affection and compassion.

After lunch, females begin their another daily tour in cleaning bowls and plates, arranging kitchen's appliances and washing the whole house, especially the courtyard. The house should be totally arranged, organised and prepared before the wake-up of the head of household, who was wont to take his daily shower, drink his afternoon tea in the courtyard and, finally, initiate work again. Evening tea is taken in the *talar*, *Barrani*, or the courtyard or with the lady of the house in the upper *tarma* or *harem* zone [I21.7.14, I28.7.14 and I30.8.14]. This daily and frequently gathering practice is strongly controlled by the strict system of communal traditions and the social status or the prestige of the man in his family. The kitchen, in the traditional house, is spatially located on one side of the courtyard, adjacent to the transitional space of the entrance, and in direct connection with the courtyard. By contrast, the contemporary family stresses on the development of this space to be in contact with the exterior on one side and internal family room or, in some cases, dining room from the other side. First relationship awards females, or those who work in the kitchen, the simplicity of receiving food, monitoring the outside and controlling their children while playing in the front part of the house. Social settings and rituals associated with eating activity in contemporary families are less diverse than the former but do not require the presence or the meeting of all family members to accomplish the practice. As a result of social, cultural and economic changes, male and, at some point, female, due to working conditions, take their breakfast and lunch outside the house except on Fridays and holidays. Thus, the regular meal of contemporary family is the dinner where both sexes join at the same table in a random order. Although the virtual impact of these practices in downgrading and detracting the social seniority and authority of the family head, the latter and males are still in control of family affairs and responsibilities [I55.11.13, I35.12.13 and many others].

8.2.3. Between Privacy and Social life

Home is a human organisation that reflects users' socio-cultural principles, beliefs and embodies their personality. By temporal evolution of the structure of the house, organising space achieves a clear and controlled relationship between internal social life (family socialisation) and privacy. Both topics occupy predominant roles in shaping its socio-spatial settings and drawing the norms upon which its main divisions and realms depend. Despite regular mutual and interconnected interaction between both sexes at home and the *mahalla* scale, privacy is highly respected and achieved through the spatial performance of and the mutual socio-spatial interplay between public and private realms. In monitoring personal relationship at the household level, achieving privacy in the traditional form has established the proper relationship between family members, and also with those who live nearby. That does not mean the freezing of social life and daily practices for the purpose of maintaining the highest level of privacy. Certain standards of behaviour and social interactions between residents and neighbours emerge or are expected to emanate in order to achieve privacy.

Division of the traditional home into two main worlds, *harem* and public (Figure 8.2), has specific dimensions or considerations with respect to both privacy and socialisation, as collective relations and interactions between family members or between them and relatives, neighbours and guests [I31.9.14, 39.9.13, I53.11.13]. During the day, women and children are the main actors

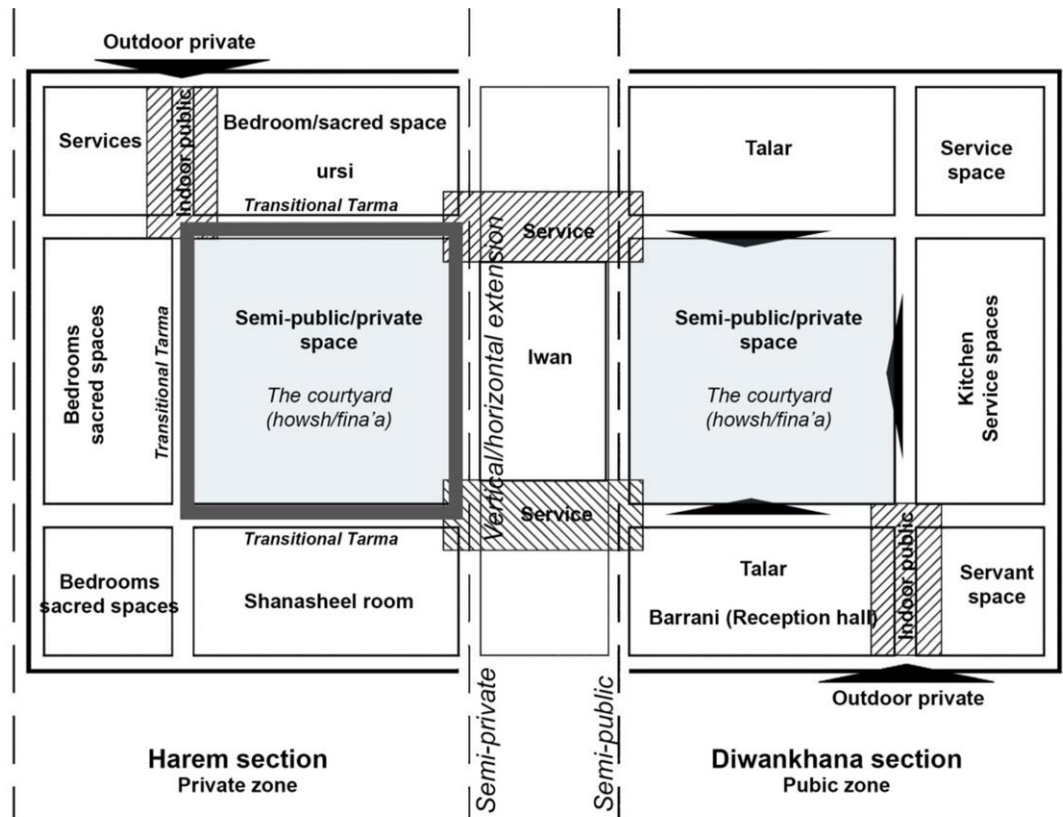


Figure 8.2: the diagram shows the socio-spatial organisation of the traditional courtyard house

or representatives of both realms, while the man finds himself in groups with peers in *mahalla's* corners, in coffeehouses or in front of premises. This situation has awarded females of the same family, neighbours and guests the freedom of socialisation using the *talar*, courtyard and, in some cases, *harem* section of high-profile families; or in groups around entrance doorsteps, particularly, low-profile families. Order or arrangement of individuals in social gatherings depends on the social situation or status of the individual over others. High-ranking member(s) takes significantly dominant position surrounded by the common. With no man, socio-spatial settings of the semi-private domain of the alley, and sense of security that have been obtained, encourage women, in some cases, to appear without a veil in such gatherings. This shows the high degree of privacy, women feel, which allows this realm to be an extension to the private domain of the house. In the evening, *Barrani*, *talar* and courtyard, as spatial manifestations of indoor public and semi-public spheres, represent internal socialisation contexts for family members and guests, where the *harem* section demonstrates the private domain for the gathering of women. This arrangement has been constructed on the basis of the high perception of the conservative nature of Iraqi society, and the role of privacy, as the main determinant.

The impact of modernity, availability of spaces and changes in social and cultural aspects of Iraqi society, as discussed previously, greatly affect the potential of socialization among family members. Social life and temporal gatherings between contemporary family members, when they may occur by accident or at the request of the family head in order to discuss a particular issue, are mostly confined to lunch, dinner or tea-break periods. These practices are largely taken place in the family room (the hall), which sometimes opens onto the kitchen, or often in the kitchen itself depending on the available space. Use the guest room (*Barrani*), and sometimes adjacent dining space, in the modern home is functionally limited to the performance of particular social occasions and rituals in contrast to its role in the traditional house (Figure 8.3). The presence of these spaces, their sheer size, cost and splendour of used furniture and high finishing details compared with their limited use, largely display the richness of the family and grant its members a sense of social superiority over others [19.10.14, 10.10.14]. Some families, as being observed, cover furniture to protect them from climate impacts until the right time for the use of the space. The situation is completely different in residential buildings, with the presence of a single family space that accommodates all social practices and sometimes even sleeps. This situation prevents the family or makes, often, its members are reluctant to call or receive guests, except for close relatives.

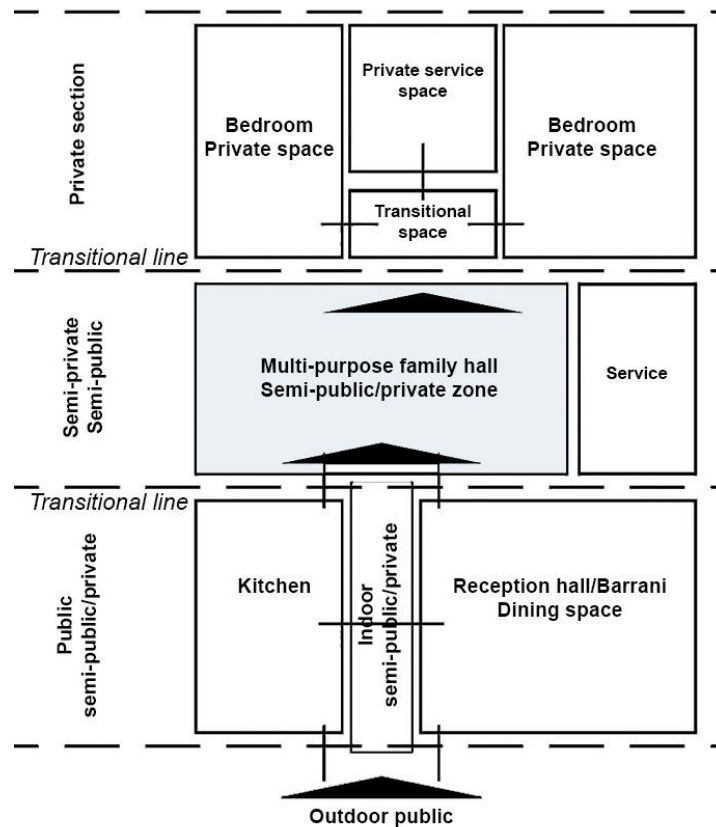


Figure 8.3: The diagram shows the socio-spatial organisation of the contemporary house

8.2.4. The Transitional Nature of Social Spheres

Study restructuring elements of the Iraqi traditional built environment, through examining the process of forming space, confirms the fundamental role, played by transitional spheres, in shaping the evolution of the *mahalla* over time with respect to its socio-spatial settings. Within this context, transitional space is embodied physically or spatially in different ways. It symbolises the border between different spaces, even invisible, and expresses the change in the nature and dimensions of spaces before and after. It represents the limit in which spatial worlds can interfere in all social, cultural and behavioural dimensions. Each transitional realm incorporates dual social fields that deriving their values and settings respectively out of the public and inclusive nature of the city, on one side, and private and conservative principles of the single social unit on the other side. The first describes and relates to the morphological form or distribution of the city or the *mahalla*, while the other refers to the house and its private settings. This reveals conscious social flexibility between its overlapping worlds. Any social, cultural, behavioural or functional change in one's attributes affects adversely the concept, meaning and size of the other. The semi-public domain of the alley, with respect to the public character of the *mahalla* or the *suq* (market), strengthens the public domain of the *mahalla* in its relationship with the house. The former relation describes the collective domain of the transitional realm while the latter captures and embodies the subjective sphere. The strength of each world suggests or gives the impression of the weakness of the other, and vice versa (Figure 8.4).

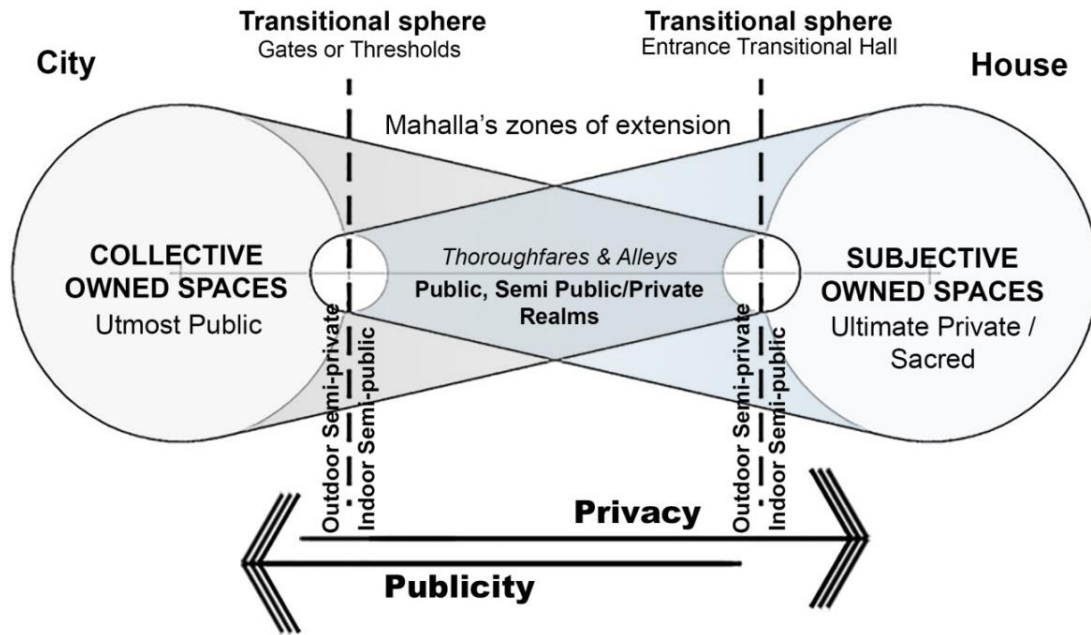


Figure 8.4: Socio-spatial organisation of the traditional *mahalla* showing subjective and collective-owned spaces and the degree of privacy with reference to each contextual position

Each housing unit, facing this realm, creates another level of the social sphere, particularly around its entrance, and extends to the free domain of the alley. Detecting the latter realm highlights largely through a change in the nature and type of social activities and users' behaviour. The existence of such realms within each district reveals the fact that these spheres are looked upon as semi-private, or self-owned, spheres compared with the collective ownership of community spaces. This nature recalls the subjective ownership of spaces near or corresponding to premises, as personal properties for shopkeepers. It gives them the possibility of using these spaces to display their own goods and products. In a similar manner, this space can be used in the practice of social activities concerning family life and society as well. This concept gives families, in following periods, the potential of setting up shops, or using their properties for selling or producing goods. Definition of these realms, as semi-private spheres or self-owned spots, is manifested spatially within the general sphere of the alley. The actual application of invisible spots on both sides of the alley led, in subsequent periods, to the decline of the public sphere, leaving medial corridor to be used for the movement of the public. Subjectivity of transitional sphere does not give households the possibility of partitioning these spaces as long as this action can affect the collective nature of the alley, except the building of, for example, a bench adjacent to or within the subjective sphere of the entrance, and the protrusion of house's first level, in some case, towards the void sphere of the street (Abdelmonem, 2015, pp. 286-287). These adjustments can be conducted as long as they do not affect neighbours' privacy or the performance of public practices (Figure 8.5).

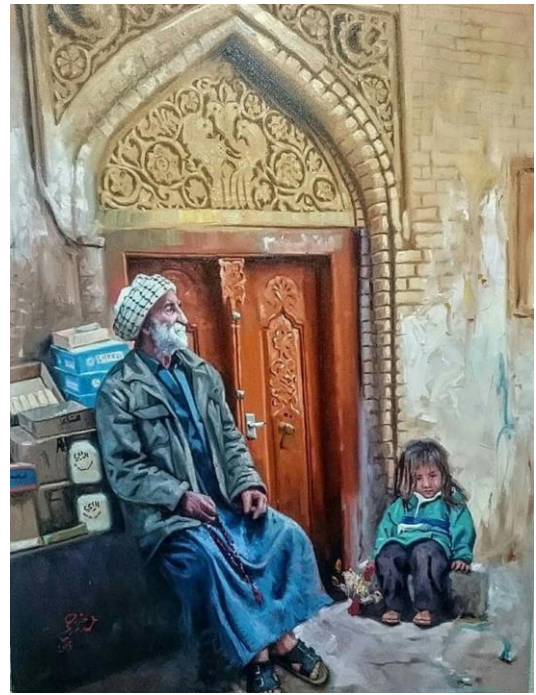


Figure 8.5: Subjective social spots (spheres) in the traditional context of *Al-Tell mahalla* in Kadhimiya (Left) and a painting showing its application (Right)

Cross the gate or threshold between the main and sub-alley, or dead-end alley (*Darbuna*), the semi-public nature of the former turns into semi-private pointing to the emergence of another group or level of social relations, practices and behaviour. In reference to the private sphere of the individual home, the latter space reveals the semi-public domain of the alley. Another level of social sphere highlights on the thresholds of residential units. Likewise, collective and personal spheres grapple inversely in relation to the spatial use of the alley or individual home. Following the same principles, the social sphere of the entrance reflects the semi-public domain compared with internal social spaces and leads to another hierarchy of spaces within home limits. In the traditional house, two main transitional spaces can be clearly identified. The first is between the alley and indoor spaces, represented in the social sphere of the entrance, while the second separates the sacred *harem* section and other social realms within the same unit, referenced by many sub-spaces and corridors. Crossing thresholds in each part of the *mahalla* leads essentially to a change in the social sphere and socio-spatial settings for each section. Lack of understanding the social mechanism for each transitional space, or the way it works, leads to the destruction of social settings of public and private places and affects the socio-cultural beliefs of the community. Control or determine the range of these worlds is traditionally achieved through the prudent social mechanism, actual understanding of and deep-compliance with inherited rules, customs and traditions. Moreover, each transition point towards the extreme personal ownership of space, manifested by the house, provides a preferable degree of privacy for its users and promotes social security for the individual family.

Contemporary *mahalla* and new-designed neighbourhoods lack this kind of organised spatial transformation, or to the existence of the transitional sphere. This shortage affects thus the socio-cultural aspects of society. Boundaries of these realms in such contexts are blurred, and the reasons for many social conflicts between residents. Dual nature of social sphere and mutual relationship of social practices characterising the traditional *mahalla* have been replaced by muddled practices and time division for a variety of activities during the day. These changes emerged gradually from the beginning of the second period and clearly affected the *mahalla* in the 1950s and 60s of the last century. To avoid their impact on the architecture of the house, the latter has been built in the middle of the plot, leaving small parts or gardens on its front and back. The front part, separating between the street and the house, detects the only semi-public realm or transitional domain whose borders end to the outer fence. The family depends on the physical dimensions of the latter architectural element in defining and identifying the personal or subjective nature of the house, and to achieve privacy. At home limits, physical elements have replaced spatial entities to extract social changes among the various activities and practices. Eliminating, or misunderstanding, the concept of transitional space in the modern home, affects the borders between male and female domains. As a result, interconnected nature between private and public realms and, thus, flexibility in social spheres have been limited and marginalised by isolating and dividing them physically into specific and tight spaces. Personal and shared identity can be realised through the closure of its external doors, which are the only elements that reflect the transitional domain in the contemporary home, with the exception of the semi-public sphere of the entrance, if available.

8.2.5. Flexibility in the Performance of Social Practices

Tracing the architecture of the traditional home requires an understanding of the relationship between its main elements represented in the social activity and surrounding space, which works out activity and time settings. Human existence in space constitutes a reference point and determinant part for the completion of this relation. Detailed investigation of general and local activities is a key factor in understanding the organisation of space, or the form it takes to complete the activity. In Iraqi traditional house, functional activities, social practices and rituals are synchronised during the day with an emphasis on the importance of time factor in the perception and completion of this relationship. It reveals what Henri Bergson (1889, cited in Lyaskovets, 2013, p. 103) called the “*spatialized conception of time*” to highlight the relationship between the practice and time within space. The interrelationship between above factors; human, space, time and activity, determines the way in which it operates the home, and defines its socio-spatial settings. Social action type and nature of its representatives identify the organisation of space and its social sphere in a period of time. Each space, especially in high-profile families, has to some extent the precise definition of the social sphere in which specific types of activities can occur during the day. This is due, in large part, to the availability and variety of spaces that can be customised to the implementation of various activities at one time. The consistent activity of the

sacred space as a sleeping sphere, especially in the evening, reflects in inception the private domain, where its location, spatial arrangement and transitional spaces prevent or block any visual accessibility or intrusion. During the day, *ursi* and *tarma*, in high-level units, take the position that can embrace different activities preserving the private domain of the bedrooms, as safest and most sacred spaces. Social sphere pattern is changeable referring to the practice, whose spatial arrangement and temporal achievement need to be addressed and determined. Semi-public/private sphere of the activity of socialisation, for example, during the day is ultimately private, sacred and secure at night. Clarity in social spheres offsets by the lack of clarity, with regard to public houses (low-order households), where the space of *talar*, courtyard or, in some cases, upper-level spaces could be the scene of the performance of several activities at the same time. Socialisation, food preparation, eating, praying and sometimes sleeping are manifestations of practices that could occur within the limits of space itself, regardless of the fundamental nature or essence of space. Moreover, in specific social rituals; as in weddings, funerals and religious events, the ground floor of the house can be reorganised and combined with the semi-public/private sphere of the alley forming a public venue for the implementation of social events.

Capability to change the terms of the regulatory system, its components and settings without changing the whole system refers to the extent of flexibility in the architecture of the house (Kim, 2008, p. 10). The high correlation of spaces in a traditional house, controlled by inherited socio-cultural principles and norms, confirms the phenomenon of multi-functionality of space during the day. Spatial containment of different conditions and completion of various needs within the same context, depending on the assumed exercise to be implemented, clarify the notion of spatial flexibility. Socio-cultural factors and beliefs have a significant role in understanding how the tension between freedom and control in the achievement of spatial flexibility have been resolved and settled in the architecture of Iraqi traditional house. These aspects are largely confirmed by the existence of the human, as a reference point in space. As a result, spatial flexibility is determined by conducting a thorough investigation in the performance of social practices within the limits of the house, and through the organisation of spaces. In the Iraqi traditional house, flexibility has been achieved through the effective arrangement of spaces, spatial manipulation of social practices and mutual relationship between each other, with reference to time settings. It is not the interchange-ability of space that defines its flexibility, but containment variable activities and practices that take place within the same space during the day.

With regard to the contemporary house, each practice, in general, has a *spatially assigned place within dominated space* (Lefebvre, 1991. p. 369) that affecting social relations among family members. This eliminates the very ability, or possibility, of the multi-purpose nature of the space, with the exception of the living room (family space). The latter reflects largely the socio-spatial nature of the courtyard, in the traditional house, within the limits of its ability to embrace different activities and practices throughout the day. To achieve flexibility in the architecture of the modern home, many designs are based on the concept of openness, but with a reasonable understanding of inherited socio-cultural values, as is the case with Al-Abadi house. In this case, the kitchen,

family space and internal multi-purpose space are joined together in an open pattern for the purpose of manipulating the performance of various activities.

8.2.6. The Concept of Social Solidarity

Social solidarity holds a key factor in extracting and detecting the role of socio-cultural aspects in the formation of Iraqi traditional environment. This was reflected largely in people's social life and intimate relationships between community members. It has dramatically described and illustrated in individuals' day-to-day affairs and practices. According to Emile Durkheim (1982, p. 56), social solidarity represents "... *the product of shared existence, of actions and reactions called into play between the consciousness of individuals*". This requires attention to, what Durkheim called, "*collective conscience*" to describe the nature of mutual relations between community members. It reveals the way in which religion can integrate people into society, and thus asserts its role in social life (Crow, 2002, p. 20). In the traditional context of the *mahalla*, Islam, as the dominant religion, and its principles stress the application of this value in people's relations and daily practices. Qur'an and sayings of the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) and his teachings encourage solidarity and social cohesion among residents, especially neighbours. According to these teachings, "*neighbour before the house*" is people's reference when there is an intention to purchase a new home. Visit the sick, helping the poor, care of the weak, to stand with others and support them in all their affairs (good and bad) and consider the neighbour as part of the family are many advantages of this factor. Wealthy families take dramatically care of the poor since the first dish from each meal goes immediately to the neighbour. Moreover, the individual must congratulate his neighbour in good fortunes, and should offer his condolences in the event of bad things. These traditions are mainly based on a deep understanding of the concept of *jura* in traditional societies.

Collective conscience and social solidarity have occupied fundamental roles and significant aspects in society. In the month of Ramadan, families are accustomed to calling each other for breakfast or share it with neighbours, friends and relatives in their homes or common venues. Collective breakfast is one of the basic attributes or common phenomena during this month, where expenses are paid or donated by one or a number of the rich. Neighbour, or "*son of the mahalla*", means a lot to residents as long as they see, meet and communicate each other more than their friends and relatives. Exercise such relations is based on the concept of collective conscience, inherited beliefs and traditions, held by residents. Applying these practices includes the seventh neighbour from all directions in the traditional *mahalla*. These actions and social relations create identifiable, meaningful and mutual residential realms within the traditional fabric. Solidarity and social cohesion reinforce the concept of proximity and *collectivity* between neighbours of the same alley. This is clearly evident in their social behaviour, intimate relations and responses to festivities; as is the case in marriage, *Eids* and births, or sorrow occasions, in death and sickness, as discussed in many parts of the research. People's commitment to common values through periodical social gatherings constitutes an active social environment and

has a significant impact in maintaining solidarity. People's gatherings in such circumstances have the ability to preserve and enhance social solidarity through the renewal and change in the daily routine of social life (Crow, 2002, p. 20).

The embodiment of social solidarity in the architecture of the house reveals to a large extent the concept of equality, where households from different social and economic levels live close to each other in the absence of any evidence of evident formal and physical distinction in their property. This issue has a great impact on the appearance of the house or architectural features of the facade. Modesty and simplicity are accordingly architectural manifestations of this factor revealing signs of social and moral respect for neighbours who cannot afford such features. Home elaboration for wealthy households has been configured or limited to internal components facing the inner courtyard. Social exclusion, as previously stated, was unacceptable in traditional Iraqi society, and presented to a large extent with the dominance of modern characteristics and standards during the first half of the 20th century. Current families compete with each other in highlighting or showing their distinctive social status on the neighbour's account, or the poor, through the lavish home construction and luxury architectural details of the facade.

8.3. The Contemporary Significance of Tradition: Meanings and Values

Arranging space in Iraqi traditional contexts reflects the values that have enabled people to embed associational meanings to spaces and physical elements around them. It clarifies the correlation between daily practices and social meanings. Social factors and cultural beliefs of the individual, as a reference point in any particular group or the built environment, are reflected from belonging to a particular community, and unfold as a result of various actions, habits, behaviours and socialisation. People are defined not only by their knowledge of current experiences but through their awareness of the past and perception of predecessors' experiences. Formulation of this knowledge, in the general sense, is a concept of "*everyday memory*" or "*cultural memory*" contained in any society. This type of memory is composed of or is the sum of a series of day-to-day practices, rituals, festive events and communications over the course of time indicating, what Maurice Halbwachs investigated under the notion of "*communicative memory*" (Assmann, 1995, pp. 125-126). The proximity of daily life is the main concept of communicative memory where all practices, rituals and behaviours are a reflection of certain ethics and rules in the organisation of space and description of its main factors.

In analysing current social images, behaviours and practices, people used to compare their achievement with the manner in which had been dealt with in past experiences. They constantly unfold traditional examples in their description of contemporary actions, or criticising inappropriate behaviours revealing many procedures and social norms stored in the collective memory. This memory comprises a set of influential rules and norms against which each activity or behaviour is used to be measured or compared. This practice shows collective memory effect in absorbing or containing rapid social and cultural changes in contemporary society. The notion of past experience is recognised on the basis of its impact, and the value of this effect on current social

actions, daily events and human behaviour. According to Wilhelm Dilthey (1883), the past, as a *source of knowledge and meaning*, detects the way we think, and affects all subsequent spatial and physical settings. It can shape *modes of thinking, social forms and organic structures*. It reveals, moreover, its positive impact as a source of *identity, meaning and freedom* in contrast with those describing it as a *deadening force of habit and tradition* (Kern, 1995, pp. 46-51). In investigating the family, the position of women and privacy; interviewees, especially the elderly, refer dramatically to past codes and standards in disclosing their significance in shaping the internal organisation of the space, hierarchical order of the *mahalla* and associated socio-spatial settings. In their description, the past seemed to rush to present as a guiding principle in assessing and evaluating current behaviours and practices. The main point, which revolves around this idea, is that our awareness of past experiences is, in reality, in our awareness and understanding of the significance of their continuity in social life (Al-Hathloul, 1981, p. 3-5). The separation between social spheres, or male-female socio-spatial relationship in the Iraqi traditional house, reveals the conservative thinking built in residents and controlled by solid norms and conventions. Within the confines of the home and spatial limits of the *mahalla*, the status of woman and privacy are interpreted and emphasised through reasonable and organised sequential order of spaces. These factors should continue and improve in contemporary house architecture, as main determinants rather than physical and aesthetic values in the space organisation. Continuity of such relics is a powerful evidence of their necessity in our approaches to sustainability.

Generally speaking, the architecture of the home and urban fabric of the *mahalla* maintain past experiences through the embodiment of collective memory. Physical form and spatial settings of traditional environment reveal themselves as solid reservoirs of culture and meaning (Bahloul, 2003, p. 2). Detection of these values requires the existence of physical compounds that utilising and embodying relational or associational meanings. Each space or physical component recalls a set of social actions and time settings, depending, to some extent, on our knowledge of past experiences that reflecting the social and cultural beliefs to its users. Continuing certain artefacts and traditions is an active constituent of the social meanings and cultural values of certain groups. In this vein, Individual recollections of past values sustain and are sustained by the sense of the collective, which, in turn, has become a key criterion in our approach towards a sustainable environment. To interpret, remember and learn more about traditional socio-cultural values and daily life for those who have preceded us far from exclusive narratives and memories, an infinite number of physical forms and artefacts should be preserved and sustained in the framework of cultural and social heritage. This definition encompasses not only the physical or spatial characteristics of the built environment but goes so far as to describe and define it with reference to intangible forms and inherent beliefs. Everyday practices, underlying social events, persistent rituals and discreet behaviours are many of these forms, which, according to October 2003, UNESCO convention for the Safeguarding of Intangible Heritage, are *constantly recreated by communities and groups in response to their environment* (UNESCO, 2003).

Contemporary significance of tradition is, on the one hand, in our recognition that social practices, cultural beliefs and rituals constitute essential components of heritage; and, on the other hand, in their acknowledgement and acceptance by community members, or at least certain social groups. Problem is that these values and structures embodied confront, currently, full of ignorance by decision-makers and people, as well, with reference to the significance of intangible forms in the formulation and promotion of specific identity and continuity. The traditional tissue of the city of Kadhimiya, and similar socio-spatial contexts in other parts of Iraq passed through, as mentioned earlier, a variety of forces of destruction and ineffective attempts for redevelopment. Changes have impacted heavily on inherited principles of society and the homogeneity of its fabric under the influence of modernity, economic determinants, political instabilities and social shifts. As a result, these contexts are currently experiencing and suffering from a sense of disruption and discontinuity, incompatibility and exclusion that emerged among the population or users of these environments (Al-Hathloul, 1975, p. 3-5).

8.4. Home and Identity

Based on the notion and crisis of identity; discussed in chapter II, personal and collective memory concepts, and the factors or underlying causes of the recognition of this concept, this part will address identity with reference to research main themes and analytical results of the empirical study. It will detect its meanings and conceptions with respect to the Iraqi traditional home and *mahalla*.

The home provides the environmental context in which people exercise their social meanings, daily practices and rituals, and thus identify their personal and group identity. The relation between people's socio-cultural values defined by their social actions, rituals and behaviour, and surrounding space, where these practices take place, is a key factor in how the house and *mahalla* respond to the needs and requirements of the population. Space organisation is managed to foresee all of the socio-cultural factors by which the house takes its shape. Social, cultural and psychological needs are people's significant daily actions and rituals that defining the meaning of home, space in addition to objects inside. Traditional house produces effective spatial and physical solutions that preserve and sustain individual's needs, social values, cultural beliefs and behaviour. They achieve the main concept of the house as a human phenomenon. Within this definition, social, cultural and psychological dimensions determine, according to Lawrence (1982, p. 104-130), the organisation and classification of space, and associated actions and rituals inside and outside space. This concept can be largely observed in units of high-profile families with the possibility of dynamic spatial and temporal interaction in the use of space. Clear definition of space and related practices, social roles and rituals, with the presence of specific norms and conventions controlling the use of space during the day, are influential elements in describing home and defining its identity.

Dynamicity of traditional house emerges from flexible and dialectical relations between social meanings, spatial settings and temporal order. Each activity; such as eating, sleeping, socialising,

praying, entertainment, and so on, has specific social, cultural and, even, religious rituals and meanings which influence the organisation of space and surrounding context, referring to each social group. Sitting pattern, for example, or people's arrangement around the space or a meal, as mentioned earlier, follows specific social and cultural constraints set by inherited customs and conventions. It traces certain ethical rules and behaviours embedded in the community. In this vein, social structure and hierarchy system of the family, separation of sexes and religion are contained as guiding factors and formative devices in the design and use of internal spaces. Sacred and secured nature of private domains and their position with respect to the public have been accurately identified socially, culturally and religiously relating to most intimate contexts in people's personality. Many transitional domains have been used to separate these realms, particularly in high-profile families, with the possibility of their use in some cases, especially in low-order households, for socialising, entertainment, praying and, even, eating. The spatial or dialectical interplay between private and public spheres and significance of transitional spaces reflect latent meaning in male-female relations. Flexibility in the practice of social activities and rituals, spatially and temporally, influences the architecture of home in adapting to changing events or social conditions throughout the day (Dovey, 1985, pp. 37-39).

Organisational pattern of spaces achieves and enhances the communicative desire of the individual with himself, with members of the same household, with guests and strangers (Lawrence, 1987, pp. 154-168). Moreover, meaningful form of the traditional house involves and detects powerful social memories exceeding functional and structural realities in the embodiment of the concept of *maskan* in the Arabic-Islamic culture. This notion refers principally to the use and meaning of social practices and rituals, more than to the product (the house) that consisting of such procedures. The interrelationship between the individual and space or place reflects the main idea of identity. In this relation, the individual takes his identity from the place or surrounding space which, in turn, acquires the identity of inhabitants. Therefore, "*ibn or wild al mahalla*" (son or boys of the *mahalla*), is usually heard in interviewees' descriptions for those living in the *mahalla* or using its spaces. This term and more others define duplicated meanings in accordance with individual's positive or negative idea of traditional contexts and people using their units and spaces. That is mainly based on their recognition and acceptance of previous experiences, and personal or collective memory of community members.

People's description of home and *mahalla* suggests several patterns of connections in their relationship with each other, with the place and space, past experiences and memories and future prospects. These types bring; as Dovey argued in (1985, p. 43), *order, integrity and meaning* to the experience in place. People's regular presence in *mahalla's* different contexts, places and spaces, their day-to-day interactions with residents and users, their use of inherited social and cultural principles in criticising current experiences and their desire in a society with similar or effective socio-cultural norms and standards are many aspects of correlation and connectedness between social spheres of the house and the *mahalla*. These patterns have become integral parts of individual's history achieving a sense of continuity, socio-cultural diversity and identity. The traditional context of the *mahalla* is dramatically characterised as home or looked as physical

embodiment of similar social values, cultural beliefs and principles attributed to home. *Talar*, *iwan*, *ursi*, *kabishkan* and alike are physical and spatial interpretations of social meanings, lifestyle and privacy. They embody male-female relation as an identical element and influential determinant in the social division of spaces emphasising the role and status of women in the architecture of the home and the *mahalla*. Identity, therefore, takes dual forms or types. The first is physical or spatial form referring to the house, *mahalla* and related components; while the second is a temporal identity that emerged in past experience, or memory, and its role in creating current one.

Home is described as a set of inter-related functions, practices and rituals, and reflects a wide range of social, cultural and emotional aspects related to the daily life of the population, more than just physical shelter to satisfy their basic needs. These factors express or reflect individual and group identities of its users. In traditional house analysis, social units are classified according to the social status of the family because of its importance in the spatial system and physical properties of the house. Each group encompasses certain elements and features in interpreting or reflecting their beliefs and culture. The process of embodying social status through the house form, organising spaces and architectural features demonstrates a particular pattern of perceptual identity that, classifying residents of the same *mahalla* and revealing their values and taste over time. They point to a particular social relations, size and type of social practices that reflect the impact of socio-cultural values in their expression of a certain identity, or uniqueness, with reference to each social system. Interior decorations, furniture arrangement, and detailed regulation of *ursi*, *iwan* and *kabishkan* windows, paintings and decorative ceilings and, in some cases, highly-ornamented entrances are multiple properties of social status and lifestyle. In this regard, “*decoration*” symbolises, as Joan Kron (1983, p. 44) argued, personalisation in developing and proving family's identity on space and its contents. These details provide significant tools for the individual to express himself and to inform others about his social, cultural and economic status and lifestyle. Socio-spatial division of the house into public/private or male/female sections, the location of each part in respect of main entrance, and emphasis enjoyed by every part with regard to social practices and daily routine, are many tangible interpretations of social status. *Barrani*, *talar*, *iwan* and *ursi*, with respect to each gender, constitute the central ring in social interactions in which family's identity can be identified. Moreover, type and quality of foreground foods, dishes and antiques are important attributes of the social status. Carrying out activities in domestic spaces is strongly ruled by implicit constraints, social values, norms, conventions, rituals and daily routine.

Understanding community and realising socio-cultural values of its members are influential factors in understanding the meaning of home. These aspects in addition to the role of both sexes in the community characterise the use and organisation of spaces. Analysis of the mutual relation between the use and meaning generates individual and social identities. In this regard, the “use” may not refer to social practice, but, as Raymond Studer (1993, pp. 29-34) argued, explicit and undistinguished behaviour, employing objects or ideas to facilitate or ease an action. It gives indicative and constructive meaning to the house and guides its use with respect to each social group. Meanings accorded by users on surrounding space and elements inside reflect their social

relations, needs and preferences that determine respectively individual and collective identities. The meaning of the traditional home and its identity are derived from its users, and what their social meanings, cultural beliefs and daily lives conferred and possessed. To understand the traditional home and to recognise its identity can only be achieved from inside, as Habraken (1985, p. 90) states that: “*we must go in to use it*”, due to the primacy of users’ meanings in the formation and organisation of its introverted form and associated spaces. Meanings and mutual socio-spatial dialectic in a traditional house are controlled by constitutive norms and conventions. They identify the possibility of meaning in flexibility in the practice of social activities spatially and temporally.

Identity is an extensive matter in its relationship with the broad concept of the traditional house. Home reveals many forms of identity, where each of them reflects specific aspects and relates to certain factors. The first pattern is the physical identity referring to a variety of physical forms, tangible objects and spatial attributes that demonstrate and produce perceptible connections. The second is the socio-cultural identity related to a wide range of personal and collective aspects, through which people can develop and impose meanings on the surrounding environment. Continuation of these meanings in individual and collective memory with the passage of time formulates the main concept of *temporal identity*. These interwoven patterns reflect the process in which *generating, developing and continuing meanings* can be preserved and sustained (Al-Naim, 2006, p. 126). This process emphasises the significance of spatial and physical meanings of home and *mahalla*, as discussed in different parts of the study, in identifying the main objective of identity, as ‘*what seeks to inform others*’. Without physical form, no meanings can be collected or transformed, and, in turn, no identity can be recognised or achieved. This relation confirms identity's entire connection with resident's values and beliefs.

8.5. Sustainability in the Architecture of Home and *Mahalla*

Following on from the previous discussion about research thematic approaches with reference to research main theme and objectives and theoretical analysis of the concept of sustainability, its definitions and fundamental dimensions concerning social and cultural factors, this part will detect previous notions in connection with Iraqi traditional contexts. It will situate and assign them in the context of the traditional home and *mahalla*.

Social and cultural factors are recommended as basic dimensions of sustainability. These factors are interrelated and intertwined with one another and are even indistinguishable in a way that the characteristics of each of them can be interpreted in terms of the other. They are more intimate to the degree that any of them cannot be investigated separately (Chiu, 2004, p. 66). Correspondingly, contemporary house responds to the physical needs of the family more than its latent values. Social meanings, cultural values, rituals and daily routine are manifested in the architecture of Iraqi traditional house and the *mahall* rather than in contemporary examples. These elements, according to those interested in this approach, are essential issues with regard to sustainability. The introverted pattern of the traditional house reveals, through its physical form

and socio-spatial organisation as well as residents' social relations, cultural values and daily practices, a shining example of sustainability aspects. Building on many definitions of sustainability, social aspects and cultural values occupy crucial parts of individual's basic needs and requirements. Completing and achieving human needs has been viewed as the main objective of sustainability. Equitable, coherent and harmonious nature of Iraqi traditional society grant its members better and guaranteed quality of social life, as an important component of human needs and aspirations.

Within the context of Iraqi *mahalla*, social structure, social values, social status and lifestyle of the community, and hence, the influence of day-to-day practices, rituals and behaviours on the surrounding environment are all the product of a set of inherent cultural norms, strict preferences and conventions. They are deterministic factors in setting up the principles upon which this context has been developed and maintained. They have defined the traditional context, shaped its physical form, organised its spatial system and identified users' mutual relations with each other, or between them and the surrounding environment. Preserve and improve this socio-cultural milieu was confirmed by focusing on users' well-being through applying a comprehensive social system within which the rich are responsible for the poor. Social cohesion, social solidarity and integrity, social stability and well-being are impressive aspects of this system. Previous levels and relations are interwoven in every contextual part, where the failure of each level of interpretations or, in fact, breaching socio-cultural limits for each level affects its sustainable perspective. Results of these relationships and procedures are manifested in their impact on the continuation and progress of this context, and on development policies. Bugs in implementing, or non-application, of former factors in the contemporary home and *mahalla* revealed a marked increase in socio-cultural inequality, in terms of social segregation, destructive social conflicts and discontinuity.

Building on Rapoport's unpacking of the notion of culture, two sets or dimensions are being revealed. The first is the social dimension which includes family structure, family status and lifestyle, social relations and daily practices, identity, kinship and so forth. Norms, rules, conventions and expectations are the main topics of the second ideological dimension (Rapoport, 2001, p. 153). These definitions reinforce the inseparable relation between the social meaning and culture, where each of them is imported through the other or being a part of it, implying thus several aspects, interpretations. The first relates to many aesthetical features or compositional elements reflecting and embodying social meanings, values and characteristics. *Shanashil* and *kabishkans*, as significant physical components in the traditional house, offer full freedom for females in monitoring, on one side, the public sphere of the *mahalla* and observing, on the other side, social actions and practices taking place indoors. Implementing such actions has been achieved in a way confirming and maintaining women's' position, privacy and social life. They represent impressive features in achieving social solidarity, stability and interdependence among women inside and outside the home. Second explanation refers to the social values of individual's behaviour promoting social life and the way people communicate with each other. The latter concept embodies covenantal socio-cultural norms and conventions with sets of organisational settings that forming the community. These factors include, as stated by Rapoport (2001, p. 149),

social values, heritage, traditions, rituals, habits, customs, codes and lifestyle, that drawing users' socialisation methods in their daily lives. The Individual, as a reference point in this cultural context, his knowledge and recognition of past experiences, religion and beliefs, as critical aspects of his personality, display the third cultural dimension. In this regard, the existence of the mosque or shrine in the case of Kadhimiya, *Ulama'a*, as significant members of social structure, inherited *Urfs* and traditions reveal predominant factors in sustaining individuals' social meanings, relations, ethics and behaviours.

Cultural attributes that constitute the coherent organisation of internal spaces in the traditional house are stored in the individual and collective memory and then passed on from one generation to the next. Space-time-activity relationship characterising the entire concept of the traditional house has been evolved and improved with the existence of respected social order, beliefs, customs and norms. These principles are organised and promoted by the teachings of Islamic religion, morals and laws. Authority granted to family and community heads, on family members and community users, has allowed socio-cultural values, organisational codes, individual and collective customs, norms and conventions to be transferred, continued and evolved over the generations. In this sense, arranging family or community members in gathering circles, around a meal or spaces by practising eating, socialising and rituals, as discussed previously, reflects and reinforces the concept of exercising authority and intimacy in traditional conservative contexts. Within this perspective, family heads or community elders can direct juniors revealing their higher position or status. Young, on the other hand, are obliged to respect these ethics and traditions, and to show them in their daily actions and behaviours. Breaching these rules or crossing their limits creates a reaction to stop this by elders or the community. These practices have created a pattern of social cohesion and intimacy, under the strict control of social order, that insisting social solidarity and thus, stability and security. The practice of these values is not limited to the spatial and physical boundaries of the locality but extends beyond its borders.

Community members, in the context of the *mahalla*, rely on inherent and latent values in their adaptation to the surrounding environment. As part of this process, they ensure things that are necessities for the survival of these contexts and for the continuation of relations between its users. This perspective emphasises the significance of traditional contexts in revealing people's socio-cultural aspects, relations and daily practices. Social and cultural sustainability are, therefore, interdependent and interrelated with the surrounding environment, and are considered as influential standards in the pursuit of environmental sustainability. Both are composed of norms, beliefs, values, lifestyle and so forth, which cannot be separated and are often seen together. Home and *mahalla* are characterised by a wide range of socio-cultural aspects that granted liveability to the surrounding context, and improved and sustained their effectiveness both at home and abroad. The architecture of home and *mahalla*, as distinctive components of the cultural heritage, embody these aspects and interpret their effects physically and spatially, through a comprehensive system of relations, providing impressive examples of effective social actions, practices and equality.

If the house is to be constructed according to specific aspects of sustainability, it will be safety and security, which reveal fundamental attributes of the human being to create a successful residential environment. Moreover, order and continuity of social life and daily practices are influential factors for sustainability. Historically speaking, dark, inactive and narrow alleys were the main reasons behind unsafe contexts that describing Baghdadi *mahalla's* nights before 1879 AD. Otherwise, the socio-spatial order of the *mahalla* has produced and achieved security and safety for its users in their daily activities. *Futuwwat* presence at *mahalla's* entrances, children using its alleys, men and young people around its local shops and in coffeehouses and women behind screened windows of *shanashil* and *kabishkans* or around entrances reveal effective securing factors in traditional contexts. These defending levels urge and submit a comprehensive, shared and self-reliance system in defence of public places. In these circumstances, any stranger would be under the control or responsibility of *mahalla's* actors. Moreover, he must follow certain social norms and principles in his journey through the alleys, and adhere to approved and ratified behavioural codes, in order to avoid any dispute.

People's contribution to shared values and collective memory, for the maintenance and perpetuation of their daily lives, achieves a distinct level of the sustainable environment. In this context, each member knows his/her rights and duties with respect to others or surrounding tissue. Consequently, no individual can start any physical modifications to his house, which may affect others or the sphere of the alley, without obtaining the acceptance or approval from neighbours and community heads. Inherited norms, codes and conventions have formed preventive and protective elements, stressing mutual supports and correlated values among the population. In this context, cultural and social values are considered as decisive components that have to be preserved and sustained. They are deeply rooted in people's cultural principles and priorities and have a significant impact on their relations with each other and with the surrounding environment. This process can be recognised through the preservation of traditional contexts and their spatial settings, as impressive components of the social and cultural heritage.

Cultural sustainability, according to Chiu (2004, pp. 65-66), is composed of concrete forms of physical components, arts and religion as well, while social sustainability encompasses many intangible forms including levels of social cohesion, stability, solidarity, equality, social equity through the achievement of fairness and justice among community members (Figure 9.6). Above factors form key dimensions of sustainability with the possibility of re-utilise and re-employ them in the current approach to sustainable developments. Moreover, the close relationship of culture-home implies that the latter, according to Duncan (1981, p. 1), communicates and relates to identity. Cohesive meanings behind the house give a specific identity for the environment over different time periods, that encouraging and supporting the diversity of social meanings, values, rituals and mutual relations between family and community members in their daily lives. The main threat to sustainability is alien factors and norms, motivated by modernity, whose impacts are not confined to physical changes, but even cultural and social values. Problem is that the pursuits of these changes and their impact on socio-cultural values of traditional society have achieved respect and acceptance from members of the community. Penetration of modern concepts,

ideologies and models into the spontaneous fabric of the *mahalla* and the architecture of the home, since the late 19th century, has influenced the nature of Iraqi society and impacted its socio-cultural values, relations, beliefs and day-to-day practices. Modernity has destroyed people's belief systems and replaced them by peculiar factors and principles (Chiu, 2004, p. 67). In spite of any social deficiencies and physical inadequacies relating to the traditional home, today's *mahalla* embodies appropriate socio-cultural aspects, reliable socio-spatial context and sustainable daily life compared with modern neighbourhoods. It provides a degree of integrated social connections, reasonable social interactions and active daily life that meet the required needs for more sustainable structures and communities.

8.6. Recommendations

The study suggests some recommendations about the importance of people's socio-cultural factors and everyday lives in the formation of the built environment, and preservation of socio-spatial organisation of housing units. Recommendations are forwarded and directed to certain categories of society especially architects, planners and stakeholders in addition to residents or users of traditional contexts. These recommendations could be summarised and included in the framework of the following objectives that have proved their role in achieving sustainability:

Socio-cultural values and daily life as effective bases in the field of sustainability:

1. Building on research results and investigations, social and cultural aspects occupy an important role in the architecture of the home and organising space. Recognition of the nature of Iraqi society, its values, beliefs, standards and principles provides a wide platform for the introduction of the appropriate solutions for sustainable context. Therefore, it is advisable to take advantage of these factors and to embody individual's latent values, principles and beliefs in the architecture of the contemporary house.
2. The traditional environment was the result of thousands of daily practices and relations that could form influential settings in sustainability. Understanding and recognition of past experiences and how social values, cultural beliefs, rituals and daily routine have been interpreted and achieved spatially and physically offer impressive steps towards creating a sustainable environment. As an illustration, considering the socio-spatial advantages of the courtyard in the traditional home, where most social practices and procedures taking place in, and re-employ them in the construction of the modern home preserve privacy, social solidarity and stability between family members as effective principles in organising space.
3. Peoples' needs, relations and actions vary by reference to their social order, status and aspiration which should be taken into account in the design process. Classification of social groups into high and low categories, in a constructive and interrelated way, shows how people differ in and share their principles and behaviour, which leads to diversity in approaching their daily activities and, therefore, the use of space inside the home and within the confines of the

mahalla. It has achieved a successful employment of the concept of territoriality in social practices that convenient to various socio-cultural segments. Homogeneous and reciprocal relations between different social groups in the traditional *mahalla* relied on a comprehensive recognition and practice of inherited cultural values and authentic social principles. Each social group took a certain position, with respect to the whole territory of the *mahalla*, to perform and practise their common interests and relationships. Low-level households, for example, used to spend most of their time and exercise their activities in local alleys to late at night compared to notable or high-profile families. Public spaces in low-order territories were characterised by the dynamic activities of adolescents and children, achieving reasonable living environment, safety and security, social stability and additional secure tools. By contrast, heterogeneity, incompatibility and exclusion in the social structure of contemporary contexts greatly affected the social environment of the residential district. It, moreover, has led to a kind of social segregation between residents and surrounding community groups, as is the case in 'Haifa Street' and 'Hamada Suq' developments. Therefore, architects and planners must be aware of these factors in their attempts to create harmonious and sustainable environments.

4. Social-core, as is the case in Kadhimiya and most Iraqi traditional contexts, provides a wide variety of activities for different social groups. It achieved reliable diversity in social interactions, increased built environmental affordances and granted people more options to meet their requirements and to fulfil everyday practices, rituals and activities, achieving, thus, an active environment for all society segments. The passive use of space in the high-profile territory was enhanced by its proximity to the main core. Applying diversity in this way achieves some kind of unity and compatible and harmonious socio-cultural integration between the different categories of society, which must be taken into account in current and future developments.
5. For the purpose of sustainability, more attention should be given to social values, cultural beliefs, rituals, approaches to everyday life and system of social networks. Indigenous socio-cultural factors serve as effective sources of knowledge in this field, and stress, over the centuries, their impressive capacity in the promotion of influential social networks in the built environment. In the context of Iraqi society, many social principles, rituals, norms and daily practices should be investigated, displayed and highlighted to push people toward practising more effective and interactive environments. This process will increasingly provide an essential social system to sustainable, integral, desirable and more dynamic contexts.
6. Religious principles, beliefs, rituals and their constant performance are significant factors in Iraqi traditional society. These principles, as discussed in different parts of the study and in spite of people's actual intentions regarding their role and style applied, have great influence in generating and organising spatial settings, physical properties, social activities and everyday life inside the house and the *mahalla* within specific guidelines frameworks. These categories must be taken into account as prolonged reliable design and planning settings in

current and future development projects. Their regular achievement sustains the idea of community and creates a sense of diversity, inter-changeability and on-going refreshment of its socio-cultural values, which lead, thus, to achieving a sustainable environment.

Local socio-spatial recommendations and people's participation in fostering the residential environment:

7. Hierarchy of social spaces and the presence of transitional realms on the scale of the home and the *mahalla* strengthen community control over activities, relations and practices taking place in. Understand the way in which these areas can be enhanced is recommended in achieving comfort, safety, security and interest by creating high-quality and active public realms. In line with the arrangement of social spaces, the concept of transitional space can be recognised as socialising and restructuring principle of different social spaces. It enhances, on the one hand, space qualities in the spatial system of the residential district and, on the other hand, perpetuates social relations, privacy and a sense of neighbourliness among inhabitants.
8. In parallel with the active role of *mahalla's* social structure, it is recommended to develop a local authority for each residential district. This authority should rely on real recognition of the legitimacy and validity of the traditional social structure, which organised and arranged people's transactions and daily practices in a rationally constructive manner. Such authority should be composed of members of the community itself, whose main responsibilities cover the control and management of public affairs, daily community practices and transactions. Its members should be constantly chosen each specific period by community members, and must be from those who have good and active relations with both the population and the state in order to effectively achieve its mediating role for the interest of the population. Its decisions should be respected and implemented by all members of society. The local authority should be gathered regularly with the presence of all residents in order to discuss their needs, shared affairs and ambitions regarding the *mahalla*. They must participate or take part in any initiated conflict among residents. Throughout this process, the local authority can resolve disputes arising among residents without halting its evolutionary process by applying active and indirect planning control in consensus with discordant parties. Regular meetings reinforce social relations by promoting several public and shared facilities for both genders for the purpose of preserving and improving the quality of the built environment.
9. Spatial and physical modifications of housing units should be implemented after the approval of the previous authority and the analysis of their impacts on neighbours and the entire environment. These actions should be under the control and management of the evolutionary process, identified and approved by the local authority. It is, therefore, recommended to establish a community-based urban management process, which responds to social values, cultural principles, activity patterns and local daily practices with indirect control by the supreme authority. In this sense, locals have the right to initiate private developments within

the boundaries of the residential district and will be involved directly or indirectly in maintaining and improving their built environment through their interventions in sponsoring and preserving social services. This action strengthens the voice from within and encourages a sense of responsibility towards the urban environment. If these were to happen, community members will obtain the real opportunity to form and express their perspective about the built environment. Moreover, proposals and decisions can clearly address their issues and priorities and employ indigenous knowledge in the design and use of social spaces.

10. The process of implementing the previous concept entails a comprehensive recognition of its significance in achieving a kind of face-to-face communication between the populations. This increases the need for potential meetings and the possible existence of a correlation between the various parties with regard to community's socio-cultural factors. Applying different social facilities, a way that maintains the status of women and the privacy of the Iraqi family, is highly recommended in these places. These factors can be achieved through the socio-spatial division of public places under the control and management of local members. Breaching social settings of any division must be reported and highlighted in order to provide the appropriate solution by the local authority and community members. In this control process, pedestrians' priority rather than vehicles' should be considered as a key constituent in future measures.
11. For successful physical settings and sustainable living environment, it requires full control over spaces by the individual in a manner consistent with the actual need for community members. Explore and investigate the reality of the house underline the concept that the individual, in his social world, must be considered as a key reference in the organisation of the built environment. To achieve former visions, people need to take their role and responsibility in monitoring and managing spaces. Therefore, it is recommended to strengthen popular participation in the design process to reflect the collective memory and common needs. Without local participation in controlling former spaces, these contexts will be abused and useless.
12. Self-reliance concept, that characterising the traditional administrative structure, by enhancing a sense of belonging in all segments of society must be activated because of its effective influence in the creation of a responsible society. This practice can be achieved through the exercise of a bottom-up decision-making process by the local authority and experienced community members. It empowers local authorities and residents in nurturing their strategies and guidelines from within. In this regard, expected division between subject and object in modern techniques, according to Bianca (2000, p. 337), can be overcome and avoided. The crisis of contemporary developments, according to Akbar (1988, pp. 141-144), is in responsibility shift from local authorities and the population to the state. Control and management of urban environments are considerably lower in modern forms than that in traditional contexts. Empowering local voices and increase commitment to the *mahalla* are advised in the contemporary approach towards sustainability.

13. Former perspective emphasised the compact nature of the traditional *mahalla*, as an important factor in contemporary recommendations towards sustainability. The sense of community had been achieved through a regular use and maintenance of the space from all social groups. It affirmed, moreover, safe and secure environments through the continuous monitoring of space, entries as well as users. At the same time, homes convergence in each region paid to the promotion of social interactions and, thus, to the provision and achievement of social integration. Therefore, it is recommended to employ this concept in urban and planning developments in order to create a sustainable living environment.
14. According to research findings, it is recommended to build a set of planning and building regulations in which social values, cultural aspects, rituals and everyday practices of Iraqi society play a significant role. Comprehensive understanding of Iraqi society and its inherited social and cultural principles is highly recommended in achieving this view. Safety and security, solidarity and social cohesion, social stability and equity are influencing factors in this set. This set should reinforce people's social practices and basic requirements which enhance their role and ability to form or participate in improving their built environment. Flexible practice-based approaches, which can be adopted through the active intervention of the local authority in the design process and various planning levels, are more effective in this regard. In the absence of specific or adequate regulations with regard to traditional contexts, dialogue should be adopted to settle or resolve socio-spatial conflicts between residents.

Recommendations relating to people's knowledge and awareness of intangible aspects of society and their role in creating a sustainable living environment:

15. Research findings and interviews' analysis showed that architects and planners, as main formers of the built environment, must hold real knowledge and deep awareness of the role of socio-cultural factors in creating an active and more sustainable environment. For the purpose of improving the quality of the residential environment and drafting specific identities, it is recommended introducing these segments of inherited social values and coherent cultural precepts of Iraqi society, due to the role they play in urban and architectural design as part of their technical work. A new generation of architects and planners who are specialised in issues related to urban sociology is recommended. Awareness of people's intangible socio-cultural needs and requirements, depending on the results and impact of past experiences, must be taken into account in this perspective.
16. In contemporary attempts to sustainability, architects and planners must formulate proposals derived from prior experiments and traditional environments in promoting sustainable issues for contemporary developments. The goal is not to slavishly copy-paste images but to develop their principles as effective models and aspirations for future developments. Preserving traditions and creating specific identity are the main responsibilities of these sectors and provide concrete evidence on how our ancestors built their environment and dealt with these critical and underlying factors.

17. It is recommended to raise the awareness of local builders and informal engineers of intangible aspects of Iraqi society and benefits of past experiences. Many interviewees have no idea of what definitions, such as identity and tradition, mean when dealing with home architecture. Developing the professional skills of these segments is useful and affordable by introducing them to the social and cultural values of traditional society.
18. The problem is in those who currently stand at the top of the administrative structure and have the power in the decision-making process. Members of this segment are highly unqualified and have no clue about the significance of traditional contexts or the importance of socio-cultural factors and residents' everyday lives in creating high-quality and sustainable environments. These members must be selected according to specific principles and have a thorough knowledge of the Iraqi society and its inherited values. Moreover, it is advisable to avoid individual decisions, quick judgments and not well thought out decisions regarding traditional and contemporary contexts and relies heavily on the viewpoint of specialists in connection with any decision relating to traditional or contemporary developments.
19. It is important to establish specialised civil organisations that take upon themselves the task of defining and identifying these values and criticise or stand against the unfair decisions with respect to the social, cultural and architectural heritage.

Recommendations concerning identity and traditions as key factors in sustainability:

20. Regarding identity, two important types have emerged and need to be strengthened in contemporary developments; collective and personal identities. Shared and reciprocal social relations, cultural beliefs and people's experiences in mastering their daily lives and regulating their interactions distinguish the former pattern. It displays evidence of collective social associations between community or family members rather than related tangible elements that describe its meaning in modern cases. Individual's socio-cultural aspects, behaviour and interaction with others and with the surrounding tissue articulate the key factors of personal identity. Glynis M. Breakwell's guiding principles for identity (1983, 1986); *distinctiveness, self-esteem, self-efficacy and continuity* (Hauge, 2009, p. 61), should be manifested through individual's interdependence with community members on the basis of coherent and mutual social norms and conventions. Each pattern promotes the other and strengthens its aspects. As a result, enhance people's daily lives, social priorities, ethics and behaviour affect the surrounding environment and shape its spatial system which, in turn, draw its activity patterns and procedures. Social status and solidarity, as well as privacy, form the principles of distinctiveness, self-esteem and efficacy in home architecture. They distinguish its uniqueness with regard to family's social order. On the other hand, continuity in the practice of social values, principles and beliefs should be emulated and promoted through the continuity in the visual components of the built environment. Identity relies, therefore, not merely on visual stimuli, but on interconnected social factors, cultural aspects and day-to-day interactions and practices.

21. Discussion on identity in relation to contemporary contexts is focused on how physical elements and architectural features, imposed by the architect or designer, reveal its principles and meanings more than the underlying values. Moreover, people dissociate themselves from the surrounding context and create instead specific and blurred identity. They situate themselves in a single community, through which can be avoided belonging to common social values. Accordingly, social identity has been described as silent and dead and its factors are placed in the background. Therefore, it is recommended to create social, cultural and physical links between old and new districts in the design process for the purpose of promoting and creating a kind of social, cultural and perceptual or cognitive identities.

8.7. Further Research Areas

Research findings unfold further avenues for both theoretical and empirical studies. They promote further researches in the scope of the significance of residents' socio-cultural values and ways of life in achieving sustainable and more affordable built environments. Deal with people's perceptions about the need to create an identity, from which they can identify and shape their personality, is an important factor or issue for further studies. Because of the sensitive nature and meaning of social aspects and cultural values, issues related to these factors are more complicated and diverse. However, it is clear that there is a high degree of dissatisfaction with contemporary environments.

Consideration should be given to the research as a step in a long and complex process to restore intangible social and cultural aspects of Iraqi society and their applications that affecting the spatial organisation of traditional and contemporary forms. Therefore, further studies are significant in widening the scope and influence of traditional socio-spatial forms. It will be useful to study the socio-spatial transformation of the home and built environment. Moreover, it will highlight how this process interprets and describes the transformation of social factors, cultural values, norms, rituals and way of life of indigenous society. This avenue requires further studies in different socio-cultural contexts in Iraq to reach a better understanding of Iraqi society and its influence in shaping the built environment. Comparative studies can shed light on the similarities and differences that lead to clarify the common principles underlying the formation of the house and the *mahalla*. Many regions in Iraq are carrying distinctive local forms, where a specific focus on these contexts will provide a systematic and documentary index about their characteristics and values. This study reveals more information about the impact of these factors in other parts of Iraq. Study of the social and cultural factors for each community should be another important avenue, which will be useful in investigating their effects in the organisation of spatial and physical structures of these contexts that have been alive for centuries.

Further studies may be helpful in identifying the perceptions of users of contemporary environments, and traits that comply with or achieve their socio-cultural identity. Lack of information or knowledge about the quality of contemporary environments, and misunderstanding the impact of socio-cultural aspects in forming an active and more sustainable environment have

been observed through research investigations and analyses. In addition, a study of social relations between different actors and representatives of the urban and structural landscape, and their impact on the planning process constitute a further research interest. This topic can contribute to reaching a clear understanding of socio-spatial contradictions, described explicitly in contemporary environments. This study may include and cover many institutional actors such as; residents and users, influential members of society, architects and planners, stakeholders, municipal members and decision-makers.

Transformation process analysis demonstrates the extent to which the design principles in traditional contexts affected by social and cultural changes of the Iraqi society. Although many socio-cultural values, such as privacy, social solidarity, social integration and interaction, safety and daily social relations and practices are considered in some details and with a considerable body of evidence, these factors still present basic issues related to contemporary and future developments. They require further attention, detailed analysis and comparative investigation for the purpose of providing relevant design guidelines to achieve sustainability.

8.8. Concluding Remarks

The main objective of this study is to understand how socio-cultural aspects and daily practices in traditional contexts affect the spatial organisation of domestic activities, and how to re-use these values in the creation of a more sustainable built environment. Through this study, discussions and analyses suggest that inherited social values, bonds and meanings, cultural principles, social relations and memories, and the everyday life of Iraqi society and its nature which are of fundamental importance for residents, symbolised the spatial and physical structure of traditional contexts. This importance has increased with the heavy loss of identity, tradition and due to the exclusion of contemporary society of social and cultural frameworks. Therefore, create of continuity and belonging to inherit and coherent socio-cultural framework, and re-use its principles in contemporary and future developments are the key recommendations in our approaches towards effective and sustainable environments.

Although the subject of this study ended up with more research areas, it is still a step and open topic to additional research into other contextual environments and analytical issues. Need for further studies do not indicate a weakness in the study, but richness as a constant theme for further avenues of analysis. Identified and discussed factors will hopefully provide and reveal a broader image for architects and planners to ease the tension between tradition and modernity. This tension can be alleviated through creating a socio-cultural framework on which residents, users and interested scholars can rely to achieve an active, effective and sustainable environment.

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APPENDICES

APPENDICES

APPENDIX A: Qualitative Questions

The questions in qualitative and quantitative methods as well as interview's discussions will cover the following general factors:

1. Privacy, Social Segregation
2. Social Interaction, Social Cohesion
3. Social Fluidity/Flexibility, inside/outside social interchangeable relationship
4. Habits, Rituals and the Practice of Everyday Life
5. Tradition, Identity and Sustainability

The outcome of the following main questions determines the primary factors behind the spatial organisation of the house in traditional and contemporary contexts and how these factors can be utilised in approaching more sustainable home environment. The different historical periods will be considered during the discussion with participants with regard to the different determined factors.

1. How has privacy been achieved socially, culturally, spatially and physically within the limits of the house/the neighbourhood unit?
 - a. What are the primary determinants of the concept of privacy?
 - b. How can you describe the spatial arrangement of house's activities with regard to privacy?
 - c. How does the relationship between the inside and outside affect the spatial organisation of the house with regard to privacy?
 - d. How have the notion of gender segregation and interaction been achieved in traditional and contemporary contexts?
 - e. How does the entrance affect the design and use of the house with regard to privacy, social segregation, social interaction and the practice of everyday life?
2. How do the socio-cultural factors of the space in all its classifications (private, semi-private/public and public) determine the spatial and physical properties of the house/the neighbourhood unit?
 - a. How has the space-time-activity relationship been utilised in traditional and contemporary contexts?
 - b. How can you describe the interrelationship between the inside and outside in traditional contexts? And how does the outside transfer into private within the limits of the *mahalla*?
 - c. What is the role of the transitional space in the architecture of the home/the neighbourhood unit?
 - d. How do the social and cultural variables affect the design and use of house's different activities?
3. How do habits, customs and rituals affect the organisation of spaces inside and outside the house? And how does the practice of everyday life affect the architecture of the house and the neighbourhood unit?
4. How does modernity affect traditional contexts?
 - a. What is participant's idea of the meaning of tradition and modernity?
 - b. How to deal with the old or tradition under the influence of modernity?
 - c. How do traditional environments reflect identity?
 - d. How does modernity affect identity socially, culturally and physically within the limits of the house and the neighbourhood unit?
5. How do the socio-cultural factors reflect the sustainable compact urban form of the *mahalla*?
 - a. How does the 'house-*mahalla*-work' relationship affect the spatial morphology of the *mahalla*?

- b. How does the car affect the organic tissue of the *mahalla* and the architecture of the home socially, culturally and physically?
6. How do the economic and political factors affect the architecture of the home in traditional and contemporary contexts within the different periodical classifications?
7. What are the main social and cultural changes in the nature of the family and society, and how do these changes affect the architecture of the house?
8. What is the everyday life of the man/woman in traditional contexts?

The following questions in addition to some of the above-mentioned questions are precisely for users:

1. How long have you been in this house/neighbourhood and how do you describe it?
2. What is your idea about the social relationships in the neighbourhood? What are the positive and negative effects of these relationships? How can you describe the importance of these social relationships?
3. How can you describe and compare the practices of social and cultural rituals and customs temporally?
4. Can you clarify the reasons behind your stay/move from this house/neighbourhood? How do you describe the desirable area to live and why?
5. In joys festivities and sorrow ceremonies, what are you doing if the house is small and not enough to perform these activities?
6. Do your neighbours play a role in these activities? Can you explain how?
7. Are there any problems with regard to transport services?

APPENDIX B: List on Interviewees:

The following is a list of interviewees participated in the oral knowledge of the research in Iraq in 2013-2015.

Interviewees	Name	Age	Status	The date, time and place of interview
[11.9.14]	Ahmed Al-Badri <i>resident</i>	74	Local historian and narrator of city's past life	29.09.2014, 10am, his workplace, <i>Al-Mahdiya mahalla</i> -Hilla
[12.9.14]	Shafiq Al-Ubaidi <i>resident</i>	55	Accountant and Narrator of city's past life	17.09.2014, 8 pm, His house, Hilla
[13.3.15]	Nabil Al-Jawadi	56	Architect; Ph. D. researcher in housing sustainability	15.03.2015, 5pm, Telephone interview
[14.3.15]	Nazar Abdel Jabbar <i>resident</i>	43	Narrator of city's past life	29.9.2014, 11am. Coffehouse, <i>Al-Mahdiya mahalla</i> -Hilla
[15.11.14]	Kamal Al-Radhi <i>resident</i>	65	Narrator of city's past life	06.11.2014, 8pm. His house, <i>Al-Tell Mahalla</i> , Kadhimiya-Baghdad
[16.10.14]	Hussain Al-Sheikh <i>resident</i>	38	Shop owner and one of <i>Al-Jamain mahalla</i> in the city of Hilla	26.10.2014, 7pm. His house

[17.7.14]	Rasool Al-Abadi	52	Representative of Al-Abadi house	27.07.2014, 1pm. His workplace
[18.8.14]	Leith Al-Nargilchi	53	Representative of Al-Nargilchi family	29.08.2014, 3pm. His house
[19.7.14]	Abdel Jabbar Al-Nargilchi	73	Representative of Al-Nargilchi family, the current owner of Al-Nargilchi house	20.07.2014, 3pm, His house, <i>Al-Karada</i> -Baghdad
[110.10.14]	Mr. Ala'a Al-Bakri	55	Architect and the head of the Urban administration in Hilla	24.10.2014, 2pm. His office
[111.10.14]	Mr. Hassan Al-Guesbi	54	Architect and lecturer in the University of Babylon, Hilla-Iraq	23.10.2014, 11am. His office
[112.10.14]	Mr. Mahmood Janjoon	57	Architect and lecturer in the University of Babylon, Hilla-Iraq	25.10.2014, 1pm. His office
[113.10.14]	Mr. Abbas Al-Ma'rouf	76	Representative of Al-Ma'rouf family	14.10.2014, 10am. His house
[114.11.13]	Dr. Mohammed Al-Anbari	58	Planner and the dean of the Engineering College, University of Mustansiriya, Baghdad-Iraq	12.11.2013, 2pm. His office
[115.11.14]	Mr. Abdul Kareem Mousa	57	Civil engineer, private sector	14.11.2014, 5pm. His house
[116.6.14]	Mr. Maythem Abu Mohammad <i>resident</i>	44	Local historian	24.06.2014, 8pm. His hose
[117.6.14]	Mr. Naseer <i>resident</i>	36	Local historian	24.06.2014, 6pm. His hose
[118.11.14]	Mr. Hamid Almureb <i>resident</i>	65	Local historian	18.11.2014, 11am. His hose
[119.10.14]	Mr. Ala'a Al-Amidi	56	Architect and lecturer in the University of Babylon, Hilla-Iraq	23.10.2014, 2pm. His office
[120.10.14]	Mr. Faris Mhanna	56	Engineer and one of the local historian	11.10.2014, 7pm. His house
[121.7.14]	Ahmed Aljubbawi <i>resident</i>	45	Narrator of city's past life	15.07.2014, 11am. His house
[122.12.14]	Hayder Alkhafaji	51	Engineer and narrato of city's past life	23.12.2014, 2pm. His office
[123.8.13]	Ayad Aljubburi <i>resident</i>	49	<i>Bazaaris</i> and one of the local historian	21.08.2013, 11am. His chamber
[124.8.14]	Mustafa Abu Ussama	69	Shop-owner and one of	06.08.2014, 9am. His

	<i>resident</i>		the local historian	workplace
[125.7.14]	Fatima Um Ali <i>resident</i>	34	Housemaid	23.07.2014, 11am. Her house, <i>Al-Tell Mahalla</i> , Kadhimiya
[126.7.14]	Um Mohammed <i>resident</i>	38	Housemaid	23.07.2014, 11am. In front of her house, in <i>Al-Tell Mahalla</i> , Kadhimiya
[127.7.14]	Um Baqir <i>resident</i>	51	Housemaid	23.07.2014, 11am. In front of her house, in <i>Al-Tell Mahalla</i> , Kadhimiya
[128.7.14]	Ansar Um Ziad <i>resident</i>	65	Housemaid	23.07.2014, 3pm. Her house, <i>Al-Tell Mahalla</i> , Kadhimiya
[129.7.14]	Um Hayder <i>resident</i>	44	Housemaid	24.07.2014, 11am. Her house, <i>Al-Tell Mahalla</i> , Kadhimiya
[130.8.14]	Sabriya Um Rasool <i>resident</i>	43	Teacher	25.08.2014, 9am. Her house, <i>Al-Krad Mahalla</i> , Kadhimiya
[131.9.14]	Thikra Abdel Jaleel <i>resident</i>	48	Architect	22.09.2014, 3pm. Her office
[132.9.14]	Unknown <i>resident</i>	48	University lecturer	28.09.2014, 1pm. Her office
[133.9.14]	Hanan Hadi	53	Architect in Baghdad Municipality	30.09.2014, 2pm. Her office
[134.5.14]	Dr. Saadi Al-Darraj	59	Historian and lecturer in Baghdad University	26.05.2014, 1pm. His office
[135.12.13]	Mustafa Alkhafaji <i>resident</i>	52	Shop-owner and narrator of city's past life	26.12.2013, 10am. His workplace
[136.7.14]	Ahmed Abdul Hussein <i>resident</i>	57	Architect and planner in Baghdad Municipality	06.07.2014, 3pm. His office
[137.8.14]	Yakdhan Al-Husseini	55	Engineer, Private sector	03.08.2014, 2pm. His office
[138.8.13]	Falah Lattif Thahab	67	Engineer and local historian	13.08.2013, 7pm. His House
[139.9.13]	Kamal Al-Naddaf <i>resident</i>	54	<i>Bazaaris</i> and one of the local historian	15.09.2013, 11am. His local shop
[140.9.13]	Ahmad Al-Saffar	65	<i>Bazaaris</i> and one of the local historian	17.09.2013, 12am. His House
[141.9.13]	Ibrahim Mahmood Al-Najjar <i>resident</i>	55	Sociologist, Shop-owner and one of city's narrator	23.09.2013, 7pm. His workplace

[142.10.13]	Uday Khafajah	48	Local historian and narrator of city's past life	18.10.2013, 5pm. His House
[143.10.13]	Mustafa Al-Niama	67	Sociologist and <i>Bazaaris</i>	17.10.2013, 2pm. His workplace
[144.10.13]	Abdel Amir Witwit <i>resident</i>	56	<i>Bazaaris</i> and shop-owner	17.10.2013, 11am. His shop
[145.10.13]	Haj Saleh Kubba	54	Engineer and local historian of city's past life	18.10.2013, 12am. His House
[146.10.13]	Mohammad Ridha Al-Wardi	58	Local historian and narrator of city's past life	23.10.2013, 3pm. A coffeehouse
[147.10.13]	Ghassan Al-Maarouf	43	Employee in a private sector	24.10.2013, 10am. His workplace
[148.10.13]	Murtadha Al-Jubbawi	56	Retired and narrator of city's past life	13.10.2013, 4pm. His House
[149.2.15]	Ginan Al-Thahab	47	Engineer	18.02.2015, 7pm. Her House
[150.2.15]	Aqeel Al-Rubayie	48	Shop-owner and narrator of city's past life	18.02.2015, 7pm. His House
[151.11.14]	Mahmoud Chapuk	57	Architect and lecturer in the University of Babylon	05.11.2014, 7pm. His office
[152.1.13]	Hayder Al-Haydari <i>resident</i>	52	Lawyer	07.10.2013, 7pm. a local coffeehouse
[153.11.13]	Falah Labjah <i>resident</i>	44	Bazzaris and one of City's narrator	20.11.2013, 7pm. His workplace
[154.11.13]	Munthir Al-Jawahiry <i>resident</i>	45	<i>Bazaaris</i>	12.11.2013, 11am. His shop
[155.11.13]	Hamid Al-Khazal	64	Lawyer	02.11.2013, 7pm. His office
[156.11.13]	Mohammad Al-Shami <i>resident</i>	56	Self-employed engineer	26.11.2013, 7pm. A local coffeehouse
[157.11.13]	Hayder Wahab Al-Attar <i>resident</i>	64	Retired and narrator of city's past life	13.11.2013, 5pm. His House
[158.9.13]	Kamal Mohammad Al-Kadhmawi <i>resident</i>	59	Local historian	05.11.09.2013, 8pm. His House
[159.11.13]	Abdel Razzak Al-Ghraybawi <i>resident</i>	51	Shop-owner and local historian	09.11.2013, 7pm. His workplace
[160.11.13]	Mohammad Ridha Al-Najjar <i>resident</i>	55	Sociologist and narrator of city's past life	09.11.2013, 11am. A local coffeehouse